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PRAYER

Our dreams, O God, are thy realities,
And our realities, O God, thy Dream;
What to our thinking are finalities,
To thee are phrases of the cosmic Theme.
We hear faint echoes of an uncompleted song;
Thou knowest the harmonies that to the Whole belong.

We yearn for Truth, yet to illusions cling;
Thou art the Truth for which we lamely seek.
We picture in our thought a better thing;
Thou art the Best of which we only speak.
The transient gusts of mood from which we fain would flee
In one vast calm of Peace are gathered up in Thee.

We hear the plashing waves that wash the shore,
Where on a narrow littoral we stand;
Thou art the mighty throbbing and the roar
Of oceanic billows, far from land.
We count the random drops caught in a shallow pool;
Thou art the flood that fills the ocean full.

Give us, O God, to dream until our dream
Becomes at last thy great Reality.
Give us to hear thy music, till its theme
Comes to our ears a finished symphony;
Into our shallow pool thy infinite ocean pour
Until thy Boundlessness has swallowed up our shore.

—Dwight Bradley

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LIFE

By one great heart the universe is stirred;
By Its strong pulse, stars climb the darkening blue;
It throbs in each fresh sunset's changing hue,
And thrills through the low sweet song of every bird.

By It the plunging blood reds all men's veins;
Joy feels that heart against his rapturous own
And on It, Sorrow breathes her deepest groan;
It bounds through gladnesses and deepest pains.

Passionless beating through all Time and Space,
Relentless, calm, majestic on Its march,
Alike, though Nature shake heaven's endless arch,
Or man's heart break, because of some dead face!

'Tis felt in sunshine greening the soft sod,
In children's smiling as in mothers' tears,
And, for strange comfort, through the aching years,
Men's hungry souls have called that great Heart, God!

—Margaret Deland

THINKING REALISTICALLY ABOUT RELIGION

HENRY BURKE ROBINS

A CERTAIN vagueness attaches to the word realism which seems to infect much that is being said these days about realistic religion. The truth seems to be that when anybody suggests that we be realistic everybody knows what he means, but that when one speaks of realism everyone is left guessing. Being realistic is just a matter of getting close to the facts and facing up to them, while being a realist may mean any one of a number of things. Literary realism or realism in art is one thing; philosophical realism is quite another. The former may have to do only with seeing what is there and faithfully reporting it; the latter, whatever else it may import, involves a certain query as to how we can at all know what is there. Philosophical realism, however, tends always to be more than a matter of epistemology. It tends, if one follow as far as its implications invite, to outline a view of the reality that is known.

Not a little current realistic discussion of religion is realistic only in the sense of attempting to be faithful to the facts. It inclines to handle its facts very much as literary realism does the situations with which it deals. The literary realist seizes upon the more obtrusive, insistent and problematic aspects of the situation, often in consequence overlooking counterbalancing and compensating aspects, for the reason that they are likely to be less obtrusive, more elusive, more wrapped up in the unrealized potentialities of a situation—aspects which are more spiritual, if you will, and thus more dependent upon what one brings to the seeing. The religious realist tends to look unblinkingly at the stubborn and recalcitrant aspects of the human scene, in the wholly justified desire not to fool anyone who may be following his account, and not to be fooled himself. Because he dwells at length upon these phases, he sometimes fails to note the even more massive, if less obvious, data of creative process, of remedial agency and co-ordinating energy, all the while at hand, and even when seemingly most frustrate quietly at work. One might put it more tersely if less inclusively by saying that the contemporary religious realist, in his concern with what he outlines as the problem of evil, is quite likely to overlook the problem of the good.

One does not have to be a philosophical realist, assuming for the moment that the term connotes more than an epistemologist, in order to be realistic in that balanced meaning of the term which involves an equal facing of the problem of the good along with the problem of evil. But one does have to cherish a view of the world which runs beyond the immediate scene which one contemplates, if he is to achieve any such balanced view of things. The popular notion that being realistic requires that one immediately divest himself of those cumulative insights which alone can give him a co-ordinated view of the world needs the correction which such a realization supplies. It is much easier, as Bergson has pointed out, to take a succession of snapshots, each of which gives you some phase of the drama in arrest, than it is to catch the livingness, the potentiality and dynamic quality which alone supply our ultimate interest in it. It is not alone because one has sharp eyes and accurate hearing that he arrives at insight; it is rather because he has lived, and is thus able, by some measure of what the psychologist calls empathy, to share the subtler aspects and meanings of the human scene, which otherwise were only certain shapes and patches of color shifting betimes upon the screen.

I

In the first part of our discussion, before we turn to consider what metaphysical contribution to the understanding of religion may lie in certain forms of philosophical realism, or in a particular form—whether neo—, critical (in any of its several versions), societal, as Hartshorne terms his view, or what Boodin calls functional realism, let us take time to inquire briefly what would happen to our outlook upon religion, and in particular to our understanding of the Christian religion, if we were to think more realistically, that is more objectively, about it. Any such undertaking assumes our ability to get behind the prevailing stereotype of socalled realistic thinking in religion and to achieve a genuinely balanced outlook. When we have spent a little time in the exploration of this area, it may be possible to turn back and inquire about the bearing of a realistic philosophy upon our understanding of religion. Our interest there, if and when we are able to follow it through, will lie in the metaphysical implications of a justified realism.

Thinking realistically about religion simply involves looking squarely at things as they are. The realistic mood is a wholesome one. It

inclines us to seek the solid earth of objective fact, the only base upon which any idealism whatsoever may rest securely. It is all to the good, from the point of view of religion, that we live in a time which inclines to look piercingly at the facts. Religion has everything to gain and nothing to lose but certain easy illusions from the assumption of a genuinely realistic attitude. But one must avoid the fads and foibles of his time, and go deeper in his quest than many of the more vocal "realists." One does not attain his end by merely saying to himself, Go to now, let us be realistic. It is as difficult as ever to locate a fact or to appraise a value.

One turns naturally to the religion that he knows best. The results of his attempt to deal realistically with it are mixed. In part the outcome is discouraging, for not everything about any religion, even the Christian religion, is to its credit. We are speaking, of course, of actual Christianity, not of some essence or other of it, from which all dross has been refined away. Whether one views Christianity from the angle of its teaching, from that of its organization and administration, or from a study of its adherents, the results are mixed. And this is true not alone of contemporary cross sections but equally of the long past of any historic religion. Yet the positive elements are there, elements which by any adequate social test are an asset to both individual and community. But it is very difficult for the person or the society which cherishes its faith profoundly to hold the positive and negative elements in balance, very difficult if not impossible for any such individual or society to achieve sober self-criticism.

Not the least among the barriers to sober self-judgment is the fact that the sanctions of the sacred so early attach to practically all that has to do with religion—to its formulas, which, though at the start purely confessional or functional, have become rigid dogmas; to its practices and procedures, which, though apparently in the main adaptations of common social patterns, have come at length to be regarded as ordained of God; to its ministrants and dignitaries, whose authority, with the lapse of time, has come to be paramount, and whose dicta, when they speak officially, may not be disputed. The net result of the historical process, even with those communities which pride themselves on being free from bondage to the letter, is to be seen as the imposition of a crystallized and more or less rigid tradi-

tion upon that contemporary creativity which is religion's central native endowment.

A primary aid to objectivity, for those who are aware of it, is the proper realization that one's own religion is not the only religion upon the plane of history or in the contemporary scene. Only competent acquaintance, be it said, can serve fully to establish this perspective. One must be broadly familiar with the best in other religions than his own. Once one knows the faiths that men live by, he is in position to assume, and equally constrained to take, a more objective attitude toward those whose religious heritage differs radically from his own. One who has achieved such an outlook upon religion as a racial phenomenon, and who has also the specific approach which a particular faith affords, may well go the length to which the late Archbishop Söderblom went when he affirmed that "where there is religion there is revelation," a modern version, perhaps, of the Pauline conviction that God has not left himself without a witness. This is not to equate every religion with every other; it emphatically does not mean that all religions are equally potent in securing those spiritual goods of which the human soul is in quest. But it does prepare one to find any particular religion measurably the channel of communication between human souls and the Spiritual Ground which, in one form or other, all religion assumes.

Such a line of inquiry prepares one to recognize not only the simplicity, the fidelity and the consuming passion of the quest which those not of one's own faith have carried through, but as well the sometimes startling evidence that they found what they sought. One may even be led by such considerations to conclude that both the eminent Christian thinker and the humble Christian layman are after all living in the same ultimate world of reality with the Buddhist layman, and, let us say, the high-minded, humble but objective Buddhist scholar Anesaki, and that each is trying, in the measure of his gift, and by the use of the most available ideology, to say what he has seen and felt in the realm of the spirit.

In any case, one is not prepared to think realistically, in the broadest meaning of the term, about his own religion, until he has thought through the meaning of religion as a universal human phenomenon. Yet to think through the meaning of religion as a universal human phenomenon, one needs equally the heritage and experience of a specific religion. To say this is not to minimize the importance of the

objective data which the science of religion places at one's command. It scarcely needs saying that there continues to be vastly too much dogmatizing about the religions on the part of those who know least about them, and who perhaps have never even met or known a forceful and upright embodiment of any religion but their own, and who, moreover, have not thought it necessary or worth their while to acquaint themselves with the classics of the great religions. Yet it still must be said that mere acquaintance with the objective data of religion, apart from a vital sharing in the life of a great religious community, does not fully equip one for realistic thinking about religion.

II

Granting the importance of a knowledge of other faiths than ours, we find men today, where they exhibit interest in religion at all, engaged rather in digging up their own religion by the roots than in getting acquainted with the religions of other cultures. And this is not without its justification. It would seem that we have to form at least an initial judgment concerning ourselves and our own religious heritage before we are in position to frame an opinion about religion in general. The paradox persists; it is as inescapable as life itself: the individual and the societal; the text and the context. Who shall separate them? They cannot be separated, for they belong together. We have to begin where we are. But whatever more there is to say about our own religion, whatever else we ought to face up to, must be said and viewed before we can properly use our own religion in a reckoning with other religions or with religion in general.

We are Christians. Few if any of us initiated the processes by which we became such. We had no voice in shaping historic Christianity, in saying what it should embody or affirm, though we recognize as we look back that other men and other generations of Christians did, in measure, have a good deal to say about it. Christianity came to us with the voice of authority, and, in our childhood and youth, we bowed to that authority and walked in the path of the great religious tradition which was our heritage. In spite of all the talk about allowing children to wait until they are fully intelligent on these matters and can choose in the light of all the facts, it could not have been otherwise with us. Very few children choose their parents, their native land, their native tongue, their fundamental ideas, or even their politics or their religion. It might be well candidly to recognize

the fact and to accept the responsibility which this throws back upon the elder generation for initial choices. Yet, once we are grown (and how many of us never grow up!), we want not only to know how it all came about, but to have some say as to how it shall go on, and perhaps even to reverse some of these choices which the elder generation made for us. At the very least, if we do come intellectually awake, we want to know. Those whose duty it is to instruct us have a single option: they can explain this whole matter of religion in terms of an infallible supernatural system, once for all given, and to which neither jot nor tittle may be added; or, if they have the wit, they can patiently show us how this faith, these particular beliefs and practices, came into being, interpreting them in terms of those normal processes by which human insights are attained and deepened and every human faith and idealism built up.

If, as a result of such an essay at understanding, one should conclude, as well he might, that the means by which God speaks to men today are just the means by which he spoke to them of old, as the means by which his creation proceeds are the means by which it has always proceeded, there would be no sharp line of demarcation between the epoch of inspiration and the present—no intrinsic line at all; and a fresh premium would be placed upon human intuition, moral and spiritual sensitiveness, insight, personal response to that which has meaning, and commitment to a way of life whose fruitfulness is ever a fresh clue to the next step.

As we go back over the very letters and records of our Christian faith in its infancy, we can see this free play of the spirit in the life of the little community of the first days; we can realize in measure how those first Christians leaped from the spring-board of their inherited view of religion—at its best, that of psalmist and prophet—into the depths of a new experience with Jesus of Nazareth; and how soon, alas! yet how inevitably, the words which their new and moving experiences led them to utter were stereotyped and canonized and taken over by others as God's last word. There is no more tragic process in the history of religion than that by which the luminous experience of the Great Apostle, formulated as he, an emancipated Jewish rabbi, must phrase it, was formalized at length into a specific theological code by which every man's faith and experience must be tested.

What are the uses of the past? Perhaps that is too broad a way of stating it. We might better ask, How, in particular, shall one find

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the values of a great religious deposit, such as the Bible? No rule of thumb can get us an inch forward toward our goal. How can they use the Bible fairly who have never stopped to ask the book itself just what it is? One can treat it, the New Testament in particular as the more immediately relevant to our faith, as if it were an allegory, spiritualizing it to mean anything that he thinks it ought to mean; one can view it as a rigid codex in which the life of the faithful is minutely prescribed; or one can take it at its own face value, as a series of papers, deposited by and bearing witness to that extraordinarily vital religious movement initiated by Jesus of Nazareth. If one understands it in this last sense, he will find that he can interpret and utilize it to the full only as he is able imaginatively to restore the situations out of which its several writings came and thus to view it in the ample perspective of the broad historical religious movements whose master ideas it reflects and whose spirit it breathes. But one then realizes that what it yields is illumination rather than prescription, and that, when all has been said, it remains for the individual to make his own venture of faith with what insights and inspirations he has thus gained. How often, in contrast, has the Bible been the great fetish. How often, even in the most enlightened communions, has it been surrogate for contemporary adventure and insight in religion. That which should have liberated men to find the living God has endowed them with an archaic view of the world and of the faith which has set them seeking Him only in the faraway past.

III

There are, then, some very genuine hindrances to realistic thinking about Christianity. Not the least of them lie in the inherited views and attitudes to which we have referred. If one could get back of these hindrances and come to the religion of Jesus, and could look squarely at the things which he seems to have had most at heart, one would discover Christianity as a liberating and creative religion. It affirmed a radiant faith in God. It took God's point of view, in loving the sinner and hating his sin. It dared to affirm a coming triumph of the will of God in human affairs, the sway of a kingdom, which, however its coming may have been conceived, could do nothing less than bring the justice and mercy and compassion of God to their full and final expression. It was, at the very least, worlds away from that meticulous legalism which had all but monopolized the claim of re-

ligion in the Judaism of the time. It was apparently much more simple and elemental in its structure than the rather involved transactional religious faith of Paul, or at any rate than the Paulinism which came in time to dominate the outlook of the church. To one who interprets them in their true perspective, Paul's letters constitute a very noble witness to the faith. He caught the spirit of his Master and followed him in that spirit to lengths which would daunt most of us. Yet he had not only his own personal religious problems to work out, but a heritage as well which made it quite sure that he would use certain specific notions in their solution. It is the verbalistic insistence of many of Paul's interpreters which obscures the vitalities of his own religious faith.

If the reader is sensitive about any of these matters, he can the more readily realize why it is difficult to be objective about one's own religion. The difficulty is made vastly the greater by the claim to sacredness made for many an idea and practice superimposed with the passage of time upon the Christianity of the first century. If all this deposit is equally ordained of God, there would seem but little room for fresh creative experience, for relevant contemporary insight and interpretation, or for new ways of expressing or extending the faith in institution and cultus. Not a few continue to insist that things shall be done as they were done in the New Testament church. Many more believe that ecumenical orthodoxy is the last word in Christianity. By and large, there is such an amount of confusion as to the authority of the past, so much stress laid upon particular opinions and practices as parmanent yardsticks of religious thought and behavior, that one might well cry, "Backward, turn backward, O time, in thy flight," that we may hear the voice of God from the quarter whence alone it can be heard—the sacred past! The implication of such an attitude is that there is no contemporary voice of God. The fact is that a good deal of this past upon which we are fain to dwell only illustrates how not to proceed in religion. We do not, let us hope, have to vindicate all of "Christian" history. The strength of the Founder's claim does not, it cannot, rest upon such established continuities as an institution going back to the Apostles, a priesthood whose orders are indelible, a direct succession from Peter's day, a final and infallible body of doctrine, once for all given in the days of the apostles—even though, as it is held, defined and organized at a later date.

The fact is that no revival of mediævalism, either in institution or in idea, is going to help the cause of spiritual religion in the modern world. Christianity must be contemporary or perish. Such an assertion should not, however, be construed as insistence upon conformity to any particular frame of ideas now in vogue, much less to the view that religion will perish if it is out of date. The insistence is rather that Christianity must today be possessed of the same vitality which thrust it out in the first place upon its great adventure. Our religion might conceivably adopt the most recent philosophical lingo, or the latest approved cult procedures, and still be dead and done—dead and done for the reason that, though she still had a name to live, the church was really through, lingering in the afterglow of a great age, warming herself by the spent embers of a glorious yesterday. We are not inclined to underrate the importance of the church, or to flout the efforts of a sincere ministry, but we must squarely face the fact that the institution has been too much engaged in saving its own life to be willing, for the sake of the community, if need be, to lose it. The church has been too much preoccupied with secondary Christianity to command the time and enthusiasm essential for the triumph of primary Christianity. It was primary Christianity, justice and mercy and the love of God, which focussed the life and ministry of Jesus.

It is high time, moreover, that the church, and in particular all institutionally-minded Christians, understood the purely instrumental and functional significance of the ecclesiastical institution. A helpful distinction might perhaps be made between the organized *ecclesia* and the fellowship or brotherhood. The latter is everlastingly important; the former is important only as it promotes the spiritual reality upon which true community must rest and issues in a genuine fellowship. The ecclesiastical establishment, with its codes, its offices, its prerogatives and perquisites, must forever remain subordinated and instrumental to the spiritual aims of religion. Morever, important as instruments are, it does not follow that the most ancient instrument, the original pattern if obtainable, is the best. Certainly it is not so in any other area of human concern. In so far as organization, standardization, codification are necessary, they must be perpetually subject to the imperatives of life, not carried along by the sheer momentum of precedent. The fact is that those who made the church a power in human life in whatever epoch of the past were mainly those who were greater than the institution; and it is mainly upon their reputa-

tion that the church as an institution lives: it is they who give it glory, vitality, appeal. And it is they, it should be remembered, who have dared to cut right across the lines of convention, who have gone out into the streets or the fields, where the people are; who have gone into the secret place, where God may be found, and have brought God and the people together in a unity of living experience. Both ministry and laity need once again to see that the church, the institution, is secondary. They need to realize that the native home of religion is, after all, where the common life is mainly carried on—in family, business and social relationships, and that the institution which seeks to monopolize religion within its four walls is countering the manifest will of God. Once clergy and laity together come to see that the things which matter most in religion are just those who shape and give color to the common life, they will realize the importance of the contemporary appeal in religion. Past epochs, each with its own pulse-beat, throbbed with the reality of religion; but why should the ideology, the vocabulary, the formulas and procedures of the church be endlessly copied from the remote past? Shall we take the insight of Jesus on this point? God is the God of the living, not of the dead.

The focal interest of religion, after all, lies in community—a sharing of the life of God in the life together, sharing not in some archaic, cloistered fashion, but through the full-orbed, pulsating realizations of the best which life now holds and that better toward which it points. The past does have something indispensable to contribute: to sever the common life from its past were like severing the tree from its tap-root. Every element of our heritage which has instant meaning and current relevancy stands in its own right. Yet religion must in the main speak the vernacular; it must, if it is to appeal to the contemporary mind, talk in terms familiar and apt. Just as Christianity pioneered new interpretations of essential religion in the first century—notably the Pauline and the Johannine—so today the Christian community must once again fling out fresh interpretations of the life of religion. They may not supersede, but they alone can fulfill, the classic interpretations. Let it be granted that the primary concerns of the faith are spiritual—but what is the proper realm of the spirit? That is spiritual not which carries an indefinable transcendentalist atmosphere with it, but rather that which has to do with the whole enduring human personality in its basic capacities and needs, in its normal functions and relationships.

In this view of the matter, one is not perforce spiritual who talks much about the state of the soul after death, or of the possibilities of spirit-communication; one is not spiritual who delights in the gossamer-like glamour and elusiveness of the mystical state. He is spiritual in the most adequate sense as he brings into focus the great ends which human life on this planet, and in any conceivable world to come, was meant to fulfill, and who gives himself to them through the long day without fainting. Let us be specific about it. It is not spirituality which flourishes when a group of Christians, dominated usually by certain rather explicit ideas as to the important things in religion, cultivates an esoteric and ingrowing piety whose only referent is another world than this. It is likely to be sentimentality rather than spirituality which flourishes. In a world so urgent as our modern world has become, spiritual religion must speak to men's actual condition, to the actual estate of the great majority of mankind. In a world become, as someone has said, a great neighborhood, and which must now become a brotherhood or perish in the welter of its own passions, religion must dwell, moreover, not alone upon the high end to be attained but as well upon ways and means. It is one of the glaring defects of much contemporary religious liberalism that, while the spirituality of ends is emphasized, the indispensable means are still thought of as secular. It is right and Christian to talk and pray for world peace, for international justice and good will, for economic righteousness and for social security; but religion as such has nothing to do with the processes and instruments by means of which alone these ends can be attained. This false bifurcation of the field leaves much of contemporary liberal Christianity defective. The necessary implementation of our idealisms must be brought within the domain of religion, must be spiritualized in the sense of being viewed, prayed about, striven for, in connection with the ends envisaged and heralded by religion. Where human good is so disparate in its enjoyment, where the lines are ever more sharply drawn between ownership and management on the one hand and the great, more or less inarticulate and exploited majority on the other, Christianity must challenge its world upside down to right itself by the rule of love. But the rule of love needs implementation, it calls for a specific technique; and he who pioneers a more adequate social technique may be quite as spiritual a Christian in and by virtue of the fact as any who preach love, brotherhood and justice in generic terms.

One feels bound, moreover, to ask, why, in a world so divided, where human good is so beset and jeopardized, should we of the Christian church spend our time upon the things which divide us? Echo answers, Why? But let us be sure of this: no mere going back to an ancient ecclesiastical pattern will ever unite us. Only a great forward venture can do it, a venture which leaves room for many patterns so long as any of them is vital with any considerable section of the community, but which increasingly brings the great unwon causes to the fore and focusses attention upon them. It is only community that can unite us—not the sort of community to be realized by voting our separate identities out of existence, but that sort of community which can alone be realized by adventure in directions not yet fully envisioned and certainly as yet too meagerly explored. Community in the full Christian sense summons us to join the desperate venture toward a common life, beyond the bounds of narrow nationality or creed, or race or class, a life in which the gifts and endowments of our human world shall, in due proportion, become the birthright of every human being; a life in which the exploiting and expropriating energies of the race shall be subdued and the native powers behind them channeled toward creative ends; a life in which intimate personal concerns and relationships shall bear a sense of eternal import and become suffused with the spirit and presence of the living God.

IV

There is, indeed, enough in the history of western Christendom to humble the proudest of us all. Nor are the most recently written chapters least humbling. Superstition did not cease when the Roman West became "Christian." A good deal of it was simply christened, so to say, and licensed to carry on at the old stand, much as before, but now under approved auspices. Pagan motives did not cease to decide conduct long after lingering paganism formally yielded to the demands of the church. The worst of it is that these pagan motives were and are so often in good standing, quite respectable and churchgoing. Anger, wrath and malice did not cease, but perpetuated themselves in the rivalries of ecclesiastic with ecclesiastic or of "Christian" prince with "Christian" prince. The ecclesiastic himself became a good politician, an intrepid warrior, a bold manipulator of estates and fortunes, as occasion and pressure of circumstances might seem to

indicate. When he disapproved of the opinions and practices of priest or layman, he might, if he had the power, bring the whole deadly force of a fanatic inquisition to bear and overwhelm the heresy in a tidal wave of blood. Of the serpentine wisdom of this world, he acquired his full share, and, while supposedly a citizen of the heavenly kingdom, had it both ways as far as he could. Superstition, persecution, venality, witchcraft, war—so the tale runs. There must, one might argue, be something superhuman about the Christian religion, when one considers the survival of that faith in spite of the fact that its Founder has been so often betrayed in the house of his friends. Unless one is prepared to condone behavior because it was that of a cleric or of a religious order or communion, ecclesiastical history is sobering reading. Surely, whatever the treasure is, we have it, as the Apostle says, "in earthen vessels."

But every honest inquirer into the past knows that this is not the whole story. He knows that the muck-raking mood produces distorted biographies, and narratives of the doings of men and the course of movements which are not true history, for the reason, at least, that they are out of perspective. The dispassionate observer knows that our human good is a qualified and conditioned good. He does not, however, because he finds such sorry paragraphs in the narrative, conclude that all the rest must be equally so. He may not be inclined to agree to a list of saints proposed by the church, or that the saints and martyrs in the calendar should rate so high as the church has rated them; but he knows that sainthood and the power to endure to the end have been mighty factors in the history of the faith. He knows that, measurably indeed, a new spirit and temper have been made evident in whole ranges of human experience by the Christian movement. He knows that the evangelic, the prophetic and the mystical moments in the life of the church have brought into being something inexpressibly precious, something which, even although one could not make his world over instanter, would enable him to live on, to strive on, as seeing him who is invisible.

The caviller may say that these doctors of the church said too many different things and changed their minds too often to be thinking God's thoughts after him; and that, since these crystallized formulations are open to question at this point or that, or *in toto,* nothing assured can be known or said about the matters which mainly engaged these proponents and representatives of religion. But, when one real-

izes that religion, like every other human insight, or faith, or *knowledge* if you will, is shut up to the use of human speech, with all its limitations, and that no man or group of men, however pious, can quite transcend the ideology common to his time and available through its prevailing formative concepts—any more than the scientist, as the history of science shows, can escape being the child of his time—he is not likely to expect finality in the deliverance of any age, in any field of human interest, much less in theology.

Such a one, in other words, will agree that there is no last word, in any realm of human concern, not even excepting theology. But at the same time, if he is fair-minded, he will agree that there is dependable knowledge in a considerable variety of regions of human interest, dependable knowledge, however limited; and there may well be certain dependable knowledge to be derived from the Christian witness to religion. Following this line of reckoning, one will come to see that, while the history of Christianity might have been different in a variety of respects, if men had more consistently followed the light which they had, it could not have been altogether different, since religion was conditioned by the common and changing culture of the times; it was limited and conditioned in its outlook and realizations by the entire context of appreciation and practice in human affairs. This is not to justify our being what we are; but it is to understand how limitations of outlook, of moral insight, of social technique and common custom impose themselves upon every generation and place basic limitations upon the scope and finality of its outlook and behavior.

What should we have expected but something of the sort which actually happened? And what shall we expect of the future but something sufficiently like what has happened to bear at least a family likeness? Yet we are not justified in thinking in either mechanical or biological metaphor about so involved a matter. The fact is that a new formative concept may create a new epoch in human thought; new occasions may teach new duties; and a new faith or enthusiasm may transform a whole series of human relations. This is the indispensable service for which we look to religion. It is, moreover, beyond dispute that will counts: the dedication of a community or of a generation to a great ideal, the decision to see that ideal realized regardless of cost, makes possible changes too vast to reckon. Human history, as a matter of fact, is dependent in increasing measure upon

the ideologies of the race and the measure of its commitment to them. Thus it is that, while we are not surprised at what we encounter in the long and involved history of the past, nor by what from time to time bursts upon us out of the contemporary skies, we still cherish well-founded hopes that vast changes will yet be brought about through fresh vision, insight and devotion, and that we shall move toward that far-off divine event, even though it be a flying goal, which buoys the hopes of the human race above the sea of cynicism and despair.

One of the chief emphases in much realistic discussion of religion in the recent past lies in its stress upon the desperate state of human affairs. The morning paper seems to give full warrant to this emphasis. To what is it due? Shall we lay it to the limitations inherent in human society, or shall we trace it back to some deep-set and ineradicable quality or qualities in human nature itself? But most of the popular religious realists do not hesitate. It is not a mere social limitation, they say, whether accidental or intrinsic. It is rather such an outcome as might have been anticipated, and was, indeed, anticipated by Holy Writ: it is the normal issue of the perverted nature of man himself. Correlated with this revived emphasis upon a traditional theological anthropology, and calculated in effect to balance it, is the stress currently laid in many quarters upon what old-fashioned theology called the doctrines of grace.

Now no realistic thinker, whatever his approach, would be likely to minimize the gravity of our human predicament. No one can have lived through the past quarter of a century without in some increased measure feeling the intolerable burden which threatens to smother every human hope and idealism. But what is so obvious in our time is not at all an exclusive phenomenon of the recent past. It seems rather to be but the culmination of forces long at work in our western world and within the very fabric of what we once fondly called Christendom. Those who realize this quite commonly say that these sinister forces, so malevolently at work in our day, are just the old pagan survivals which Christendom failed to suppress. And these are just the signs which reveal human nature as it essentially is.

Unfortunately for all blanket explanations, the answer is usually not so simple. Those who ring the changes in our day on this type of explanation should be reminded that we have on our hands not merely the problem of evil, but as well the problem of the good. To

be sure, the short method with the problem of the good is to say that it is no problem at all, since the good, wherever and whenever it emerges in the human scene, is simply and directly the work of divine grace—a direct operation of Deity, so to say, upon and through the redeemed, which has at length seeped through the social structure and embodied itself in ideals more or less common as well as in measurably constructive institutions and procedures which affect the life of all. In the long run, however, it is divine grace which alone is responsible for human good—a grace which operates not through but across the natural order; though, on the other hand, we are assured, it is human perversity alone which is responsible for moral evil of every sort. Man gets the credit for whatever goes wrong, while God is substantially responsible for whatever good may be discernible in the human scene.

It is difficult to conclude that this view of the matter is the result of realistic thinking. It looks much more like the recrudescence of mediaevalism in religion. It moves entirely within the rather rigid framework of venerable but inherited solutions. It does, indeed, give God the glory; but it fails completely to relate the good to those processes in human personality and in society by which morality is achieved and character registered in human experience. Moreover, it views human nature in wholly static terms. The fact seems to be, however, that human good, like the human organism, has a long history, and that the only justified approach to the whole matter is the genetic approach. This is, in fact, the approach of the scientist to kindred problems. The theologian, no matter what his point of view, can, of course, much more readily reconcile the good than the evil with the presence and activity of God. But this fact, unfortunately, frequently disposes him to seek some compromise with the older approach; so that, even although he may grant that the evolutionary approach is revelant to inquiry of this type, his fundamental solutions are not in terms of it. The geneticist, our theologian is likely to conclude, has little or nothing, after all, to contribute to any discussion of the moral nature and achievement of man.

Now a more realistic approach than that taken by the so-called realistic theologians will insist that the geneticist has something to contribute to the understanding of human good and its achievement. Considered from this angle, it becomes apparent that, just as man's body has grown through the long ages from the more primitive to

the fully human, so that today it endows and defines him as man, so his mind and will have grown. It is not a mere mechanical complication, but an actual growth in power of moral discrimination and in creative capacity, so that he is dreamer and doer of morally more adequate deeds and relations as well as of what is subversive of human good. He is not dreamer of better things only; he is also doer of them; and between the vision and the deed is the will, which, however limited in range, must bear responsibility for both evil and good. Very well, say not a few, but evil predominates! I wonder. In the headlines, yes; because evil is always more problematic than the good. There is no direct means of weighing the good of any given age against the evil of that age, and hence there is no direct means of demonstrating the falsity of the judgment that evil is predominant age after age. But one needs to keep in mind the persistent emergence of the good, for which there must be a basis in the very nature of things. One needs to come back again and again to the evident, if slow, growth of conscience on ancient evils. One needs, perhaps even more fundamentally, to trace the basic dissatisfaction of man with himself in his present condition, and his efforts to change that condition. It has to be said that, in general, the claim that evil predominates, and will predominate, connects with the old static view of a once-for-all perverse human nature, a view which flies in the face of the fact that human nature is after all educable and may accordingly be itself continually in process of change.

If one is to bring God into the picture at all—and the theist, of course does, whether he be geneticist or not—he must allow for long-range operations. It is all very well to say that God might transform the human as we know it outright. The fact is that he doesn't seem to have done it; no, not even with the saints. Even they had to follow through those toilsome and enduring processes by which motives are creatively transformed and men become new creatures. The frailties of even the best of religious men lead us to believe that grace is not to be set over against nature in this dualistic fashion. It were much better, if you wish to use the term, to locate grace within nature: to say, that is, that God, in creating human personalities and human society by the genetic method, supplies in their background and heritage, and in his continuously sustained relation to the contemporary order, the basis for the transformation of the more primitive into the higher and more socialized, and thus more truly moral, be-

havior. That endowment which we call freedom, whose range is forever beyond our charting but whose reality we acknowledge every time we make a decision or a choice, introduces a factor of uncertainty into the individual curve and into the social curve as well. None the less, statistical averages, if we may continue the figure, will disclose a general upward movement of the race—a movement not alone in response to the claim of social ideals, but in behavior surely, if more tardily, conforming to the ideals whose claim is thus acknowledged. To one who stood across from the Foreign Ministry in Paris and saw the Kellogg Pact signed by one after another of the European dignitaries, as I did, and who felt the heart-throb of the Paris multitude as, with their backs to the Seine, they fronted that scene, there came the sudden conviction that this glimpsed and cherished dream of the outlawry of war, this dream of world peace, must one day have its fulfillment, by the will of man as well as by the will of God; but there came also the equally sobering thought that it will never have fulfillment except by the will of man.

How slowly we move! Whatever our theory in this matter of peace, we all realize the indispensable place, in any solution, of the will to peace. They were right, in a very profound sense, who said that ultimate solutions rest back upon the transformation of the individual. In this, as in every other wrong that cries to Heaven for righting, there must come to birth, in the individual human soul, a vital new idealism which can claim his passionate commitment. But they were wrong who insisted that this is the whole matter. There must be collective action, embodying an adequate technique of good will, ere peace can be made the permanent possession of the race. Does God normally break in upon these age-long processes, to speed them up? Are all specific gains to be attributed to such specific interference of Deity in the social process? Or does God work by those very means, subtle and slow as they seem, by which human wills come at length to frame choices in the light of more adequate perspectives and in the face of more adequate objectives? There is room for a world of good realistic theology at this point. When men come to see the reality and creative presence of God in every normal human process, in every creative and constructive organization of nature, the matrix of the human; when they come to realize that his presence and undergirding reality are realizable in greatest measure as the individual or the group faces forward and enlists mind and will in behalf of the common

good, there will emerge a new pattern of sainthood and a fresh definition of religious experience which will make it less remote and recondite than it has historically tended to be.

V

Going back now to our query about realistic thinking in religion, it will sharpen the issue if we bring our discussion to a close in a series of statements embodying a specific point of view and suggesting areas in which there is yet room for genuine religious realism. The list is not meant to be exhaustive.

1. We of the West are wont to think of religion too exclusively in terms of the Christian religion. As a consequence of our relative ignorance of the great field of religion, we know less than we ought to know of the significance of our own inherited faith.

2. We Christians of today tend to think of the Christian faith too exclusively in terms supplied by the first century, the fourth and fifth centuries, the sixteenth or the eighteenth century, and far less aware of modes of thought more congenial to contemporary insights into nature and human nature, personality and society, than we ought to be; and thus realize less clearly than we ought the actual issues which confront religion in its twentieth century milieu.

3. The consequence of this general outlook on religion is that the mind of the Christian community is far too largely prepossessed by ideas, customs and attitudes which, while apt and relevant in the centuries in which they arose, are measurably inept and irrelevant to contemporary life.

4. This means that organized Christianity in our day is far too much preoccupied with the *status quo ante* of belief and practice and is far too little aware that creeds and rituals must ultimately stand or fall as they express or suppress the life of the spirit in its contemporary manifestations.

5. The institutional emphasis in contemporary Christianity goes far toward preventing the majority of Christians from realizing that the natural habitat of religion is the individual human soul and the common life, and that it resides and can reside only secondarily and instrumentally in institutions such as churches, orders, religious societies.

6. In wide sections of Protestant Christendom so great an emphasis has been laid upon a transactional and individualistic gospel as to

permit the individual to substitute its "finished work" for the personal self-discipline and the social participation by which alone personality can achieve adequate orentation.

7. As a result, great numbers of folk connected with organized Christianity have no vital, compelling faith which functions within them as a dominant integrative factor, giving unity, direction and momentum to their lives.

8. Moreover, the ultra-individualism of a large section of Protestantism permits large numbers of folk to qualify as Christians and to maintain themselves in good standing as such who have not done even the most rudimentary thinking on the problem as to how the race is to be brought into the actual experience of community, which experience, as reflection will make clear, involves and conditions every fundamental human right.

9. The failure of organized Christianity to participate more effectively in the motivation and control of life within Christendom itself, as instanced repeatedly since the outbreak of the World War, is due in some degree at least to the fact that the pulpit and the Christian cultus focus their attention to such an extent upon matters remote from the arena of life itself.

10. Back of the whole series of specific problems which define themselves more or less clearly, once one begins to reflect upon these matters, is a failure in fundamental thinking about the Christian religion. Not a few of those who profess to discuss Christianity in realistic terms are themselves at some indeterminate point between crass traditionalism and the approach to religion which modern knowledge and appreciations make possible. The effort at compromise results in confusion, in the failure of a proper sense of direction. One of the chief effects of this state of affairs is that great numbers of folk in the pews see no alternative to the traditional stereotype, which is nothing if not sure of itself.

IN DEFENSE OF OPTIMISM[1]

CONRAD HENRY MOEHLMAN

Members of the Graduating Class:

SOME twenty-two centuries ago, a pessimist wrote: "What path of life may a man tread? In the market place are quarrels and troubles, at home worries. In the country abundant weariness, on the sea terror. In an alien land, fear if thou hast anything; if thou art destitute, discomfort. Thou art married? Thou are not free from worry. Thou art not married? Yet more lonely dost thou live. Youth is senseless, forceless again are gray hairs. The choice is one or other of these two: either never to be born or to die straightway at birth."

"Utterly vain, everything is vanity" was the ancient churchman's verdict.

In the opening decade of this century, a New York City preacher thus defined the mission of the church in this age: "It is not to save society, make it better, and set up a spiritual kingdom in the world which has rejected the king, and where his cross still flings the shadow of its brutal shame upon an unrepentant earth. The mission of the church is not to cry peace in a world which, by the grace of God alone, simply exists under a pronounced, but suspended sentence. The church is here as the ark was in the days before the flood, a witness of the world's condemnation, a warning of judgment to come, and an open door of invitation, bidding men flee unto him who is the head of a new and coming race, and the alone author of eternal life to men."

"Lot dwelt in Sodom, took office, sat in the gate, endeavored to purify the sinful city, vexed his righteous soul every day with its filthy conversation and was, at last, in spite of his own protest, snatched out of it, saved out of it, by the hand of the Lord and, standing afar off, saw his work of purification, moral effort and social tinkering, go up in a blaze of divine judgment as so much wood, hay and stubble. The church is not to spend its energies on purifying Sodom, but to witness against it, keep separate from it, and warn those who are within that now is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time."

Within a biennium "Jehovah's witnesses" announced that "the churches form the religious part of the world's organization and hence a

[1] The Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, N. Y., May 24, 1937.

part of the world. All churches and their leaders participate in the politics of the world. . . . The churches and their clergymen, forming a part of the world are therefore according to the Scriptures enemies of God."

And the much praised Karl Barth during the short period of his sway lashed Protestantism with this: "Any kind of mockery may be more acceptable to God than thine own complacent Protestantism, thou fool." "The question ever recurs whether theology and the church had not better liquidate, since they cannot summon the courage to be what they are! If, however, they are courageous enough not to liquidate, then with every discouraging recollection of the banality of all human activity let it not be too great or too triumphant a banality," while Buchman takes a moment off to "thank heaven for a man like Adolf Hitler," according to a press report.

The desperate condition of German Protestantism is certainly in evidence when one of its prominent historians, Georg Wolfram, suggests that Luther's battle hymn, *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* was composed to rally his followers against the Turks rather than against the Catholics.

One who is inclined to confine this pessimism to Protestantism, might with profit consult the files of American Catholic journals where the "leakage out of Peter's barque" is receiving continuous attention. The number of mixed marriages in the United States come to one third of the Catholic marriage total. The childless families run almost parallel and the number of baptisms steadily decline, we are informed.

All this gloom, however, is more than balanced by a radiant optimism. Poseidippus had but dictated his lugubrious lines, when Metrodorus answered: "Any path of life thou mayest tread. In the market place is glory and wise action, at home rest. In the fields the charm of nature, on the sea gain. In the alien land if thou hast anything, good name; if thou art in lack, thou alone knowest it. Thou art married? So shall thy household be best. Thou art unwedded? Thou livest yet more easily. Children are the desire of the heart, a childless life is care free. Youth is vigorous, revered again are gray hairs. The choice is not one of the two; never to have been born or to die; for all is good in life."

And a Hebrew poet discovered that he could not escape from God: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there."

The Russian poet who set down the "Ode to God" felt the supporting power of the Unseen Companion:

O thou Eternal One! Whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide.
Unchanged through time's all devastating flight,
Thou only God! There is no god beside.
Being, above all beings! Mighty One!
Whom none can comprehend, and none explore.
Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone!
Embracing all, supporting, ruling o'er.
Being whom we call God! And know no more.

A million torches lighted by Thy hand
Wander unwearied through the blue abyss.
They own Thy power, accomplish Thy command,
All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss.
What shall we call them? Piles of crystal light?
A glorious company of golden streams?
Lamps of celestial ether, burning bright?
Suns lighting systems with their joyous beams?
But Thou, to them, art as the noon to night.

Yes, as a drop of water in the sea,
All this magnificence is lost.
What are ten thousand worlds compared to Thee?
And what am I, then? Heaven's unnumbered hosts,
Though multiplied by myriads, and arrayed
In all the glory of sublimest thought,
Are but an atom in the balance, weighed
Against Thy greatness—but a cypher brought
Against Infinity. What am I, then? Nought.

Nought? But the effulgence of Thy light divine,
Pervading worlds, hath reached my bosom too.
Yes, in my spirit doth Thy spirit shine,
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.
Nought? But I live, and on hope's pinions fly
Eager toward Thy presence; for in Thee
I live and breathe, and dwell, aspiring high,
E'en to the throne of Thy divinity.
I am, O God! And surely Thou must be.

What, then, is the case for optimism?

The triumph of optimism is guaranteed by the process called life. Life is mysterious, always presenting problems to be solved, always keeping us alert and curious and creative, summoning each one to play his part, rewarding those who are friendly and ready to co-operate, relegating those who refuse to respond.

The wise help-mate of life is death, which in time removes those who cannot adjust themselves, who remain inflexible. Those too sagacious and experienced and prudent to experiment after a while find themselves in the grandstand looking on. For the game of life goes on. The indispensable ones discover themselves fully replaced by youngsters.

Abler teachers with newer methods and better insights wait to take the places of any who are getting tired of keeping up. Eight years later the memorial service for a departed president attracts less than fifty. Nineteen years after a modern social prophet lays his armor down, thirty-two finally are counted at an address in his honor! *Sic transit gloria mundi!* The present appeals. The future beckons. A course passed is a course forgotten. The coveted degree has been conferred. Henceforward it belongs to the past.

Precisely why should one be fearful in such a throbbing age as the present? To be sure the art and science of propaganda are ever pursuing us. But the radio can be turned off and the ugly editorial consigned to the flames. The omnipotent state has arrived but only as a transition to an international commonwealth. Religious control is disintegrating but the good life appeals as never before. The sovereignty of science is converting the world into a neighborhood. When education has been fully democratized and the new economy has advanced beyond adolescence and Europe has recovered from the jitters, our great grandchildren and their great grandchildren may decide that it is unwise to settle scores by war.

But the age of religion is over! Really? Do you think that religion can be destroyed? Religion—so hoary with age, so interwoven with all the higher values of life, concerned with God and the soul and destiny, originating on the border line between the known and unknown where mystery, wonder, and fear ever dwell, with the power of life in its sacraments and the power of death in its anathema, with science unable to solve the problem of death, with its promises of the future,

with its capacity to appropriate and harmonize and assimilate, with its ability through allegorization to transform its traditions?

It were far better to understand religion than to regard its mission completed. That experience of Francis William Newman is still to the point: "While at Aleppo," he tells us, "I one day got into a religious discussion with a Mohammedan carpenter, which left on me a lasting impression. Among other matters, I was peculiarly desirous of disabusing him of the current notion of his people, that our Gospels are spurious narratives, of late date. I found great difficulty of expression, but the man listened to me with much attention, and I was encouraged to exert myself. He waited patiently till I had done, and then spoke to the following effect: 'I will tell you, sir, how the case stands. God has given you English a great many good gifts. You make fine ships, and sharp pen-knives, and good cloth and cotton; you have rich nobles and brave soldiers; you write and print many learned books (dictionaries and grammars); all this is of God. But there is one thing that God has withheld from you and has revealed to us, and that is, the knowledge of the true religion, by which one may be saved.' When he had thus ignored my argument (which was probably unintelligible to him) and delivered his simple protest, I was silenced and at the same time amused. But the more I thought it over the more instruction I saw in the case."

Indeed, the emphases of religion are still very much needed today. Humanity needs a faith that love is at the heart of life, that love is superior to hate, that men must become brotherly or they perish, that a law of service and sacrifice underlies life, that the law of sowing and reaping is in the structure of things, that happiness is an accompaniment or consequence of the good life and never an end, and that the only permanent award of life is creative living.

Not even the roar of the subway express can conquer religion.

I who have lost the stars, the sod,
For chilling pave and cheerless light,
Have made my meeting-place with God
A new and nether Night—

You that 'neath the country skies can pray,
Scoff not at me, the city clod;
My only respite of the Day
Is this wild ride—with God.

—Chester Firkins.

Christianity's final word is victory. Its God is good, active and demanding an ethical response from his creatures. Christianity exalts the value of personality and cultivates reverence for life. It seeks to overcome the glaring inequalities of life by love. The Father really cares about the experiences of his children.

One of the most serious shocks experienced by first generation Christianity was the collapse of the kingdom faith. It had been born out of the tragedy which was Calvary. Christianity could never have started if it had not projected its faith in Jesus to a coming upon the clouds of the sky. Yes, the celestial kingdom would come down out of heaven during their lifetime. Jesus would descend from the right hand of the Father in visible form to judge the world and inaugurate the glorious reign of God. But after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, the Christians knew they were wrong but straightway reinterpreted their hopes by assuming that a day with God was as a thousand years and a generation as ten million years or that Jesus had returned in the Comforter or that the Kingdom was the church. In our own day the Kingdom faith has again been reinterpreted to agree with a process view of history. But the main point is always similar; Christianity has ever believed in its triumph.

The critical historian or sociologist may be pardoned for painting a dark present or darker future for the church. The Christian literalist who blots out nineteen centuries of Christian history to rescue his texts can be understood. But what shall be said of a believing Christian who refers to the demise of the church, utterly forgetful of: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her;" "it is the church of the living God;" "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blemish."

Religion has always been social in its expression; always concerned with the art of living. The institution must be. The church will always be necessary. It will ever be repentant and subject to criticism. If all the churches ceased to exist tomorrow, on Wednesday the finest men and women would inaugurate the drive for new ones. Common worship is a basic need and the ethical nature is reinforced by group life. So that Emerson was not far astray when he wrote: "Be not betrayed into undervaluing the churches which annoy you by their

bigoted claims. . . . I agree with them more than I disagree; I agree with their heart and their motive; my discontent is with their humiliations and surface and language. Their statement is grown as fabulous as Dante's *Inferno*. Their purpose is as real as Dante's sentiment and hatred of vice."

The correct diagnosis of the principal ailment of Christianity has been made. Hence recovery has become much more probable. When religion is sold "practically a hundred per cent for what it will bring man in worldly if not material benefits," when a new scale-pan view of religion is presented in *The Return to Religion,* the serious Christian realizes danger ahead. But when a poem in the London Daily News stabs us broad awake to our social evils, a new day seems to be dawning:

"Hamlets breaking, homesteads drifting,
peasants tramping, towns erased;
Lo! My lords, we gave you England,
and you gave us back a waste.
Yes, a desert, labelled England;
where you know (and well you know),
That the village Hampdens wither
and the village idiots grow,
That the pride of grass grows mighty
and the hope of man grows small
Will you call on croft and village?
Let the rabbits hear you call.
Would you call upon the people
Would you waken these things then?
Call on God, whose name is pity;
Do not ask too much of men."

It was in the April number of the Forum that a worthy priest pointed out that Spain's fatal sickness of today began during the nineteenth century, when the working masses apostatized from the church. And today's chief sign of the times was described as the failure of the poor any longer to ring the door-bell of the church. "Cardinal O'Connell in 1928 was the biggest single taxpayer in all Boston on his own personal holdings" and "congregations of priests, nuns and brothers were buying so many millionaires' estates and purchasing so much property, especially in Westchester and adjoining counties in New York State that Governor Smith warned Cardinal Hayes that

unless their buying were stopped a citizenry already overburdened by tax exempt church property might revolt," we read.

Diagnosis is being followed by repentance and rebellion on the part of the laity, the ministry, and Christian youth. Lo! the night is almost over.

As an illustration of the regeneration of numerous Christian laymen, consider this program of one: "To live simply and sacrificially, avoiding waste and luxury; to practice brotherhood toward all; to strive after international justice and good will; to redeem the social order; to seek a new discovery of God; to engage in co-operative adventure."

Or consider this sober exhortation to ministers: "Would it not have been extraordinary gain to Christianity if those who are called to be its ministers—the missionaries and pastors, had followed the Lord's rules? At the very least, it ought to be a strict principle with them to concern themselves with property and worldly goods only so far as will prevent them being a burden to others, and beyond that to renounce them. I entertain no doubt that the time will come when the world will tolerate a life of luxury among those who are charged with the cure of souls as little as it tolerates priestly government. Our feelings in this respect are becoming finer, and that is an advantage. It will no longer be thought fitting, in the higher sense of the word, for anyone to preach resignation and contentment to the poor, who is well off himself, and zealously concerned for the increase of his property. A healthy man may well offer consolation to the sick; but how shall a man of property convince those who have none that worldly goods are of no value? The Lord's injunction that the minister of the Word is to divest himself of wordly possessions will still come to be honoured in the history of his communion."

Yes, ministers must be different.

The ministry will not lose its sense of mission to worship in the shrine of Mammon. It will yet sacrifice salary and comfort to complete the sufferings of its founder.

And Christian youth the world over, wearying of listening to the funeral march of our leading pessimists, is demanding that the optimistic notes be struck just once in a while. A few weeks ago, the eminent Catholic youth leader in the United States, editor of the *Queen's Work* and National Director of the Sodality movement, Daniel A. Lord, S.J., was in conference with a Catholic college group whose spokesman had something to say in reply to the criticism of contemporary church youth:

"Yes, we are pessimists. We do sing the blues. But you oldsters are to blame. Why, we hear nothing but the blues sung all around us, and by you. We go to church on Sunday and from the pulpit the priest shakes doleful head over the way in which the whole world is going to rot. We pick up the Catholic papers and we read that all civilization is hovering on the brink of collapse. We go to our classrooms and we hear from the English professor an account of the 'decay of modern literature' and from our philosophy professor a stern denunciation of the 'horrors of materialism,' and the 'blight of pagan agnosticism.' I'd say that the churchmen have stopped singing the Canticle to the Sun and are in a vast minor chorus singing just one theme: 'There ain't no hope, brothers; there ain't no hope.' When we begin to hear a little optimism from our elders, you may see a little optimism in the stories we write and the editorials which echo, I am afraid, the current blues—singing of our lay and clerical leaders."

Possibly this rejoinder from Catholic youth will awaken a few Protestant leaders to the damage they are doing to Christian youth by their ill-advised and all-out-of-perspective pessimism.

Marshall Wingfield's exhortation should be heeded:

O timorous Church of Christ! cease counting your gains and losses:
The Future, imperiled, is calling with the voice of a million crosses!

Calling for faithful prophets and seers to rise up and prophesy—
To kindle a fading vision afresh lest a visionless people die.

Our sins are many, our needs are sore, O Prophets, show us the roll—
Take up the scales of God once more and weigh the things of the soul.

Point not wholly to the patriarchs for the guidance we need to-day.
Scrolls of the ancients we cherish, but prophets must lead the way.

Waits the importunate world for a word to quicken its heart again;
Then speak, O Church, and rekindle the faith in a world of despairing men.

ACTIVITY AND WORSHIP

HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER

THE future of Christianity depends in a large measure on the future of its churches, and the future of the churches depends less on the future of religion than on the future of money. Empirically and historically Christianity is what the churches do, and how much the churches can do is in the last analysis a matter of how much money they can command. Whether the world will be christianized or militarized or incorporated or communized or "stay put" depends on which of the various institutions of mankind can pay wages to the most "workers" in its interest. To a certain extent, I admit, a man will invest in the objects of his faith, and his faith may be called his religion. But to a larger extent men are not free to choose how they will spend their incomes; they must spend as circumstances and the powers that be dictate. How a man spends his resources is not a reliable measure of his faith, but rather of his obligations. Few institutions receive money; they go and get it. In this business of being able to bring pressure enough to bear on men to get their money, the churches have recently been losing out. Secularized states, schools, arts, hospitals, unions, and many other institutions (which themselves, by the way, have frequently in the past been Christian, that is, controlled by churches) are making the primary demands on the people's purse. The churches must be content with what is left and must, therefore, be supported by those who have money to spare. This situation may be changed over night by some act of God or some new "Word that proceedeth from the mouth of God," but humanly speaking, even the Word of God must have bread to *live*. It may have an eternity without material resources, but it will have no future. It may be prudent, therefore, to take the present financial predicament of the churches seriously and to ask what are the implications for religion in the future if this state of affairs continues. On a restricted budget, what should the churches undertake to do?

I might as well face at once the retort of the clergy—"Ye men of little faith" etc. Religion must come first, or it can not come at all, they say. It was Stanley Jones, I believe, who on the recent preaching mission exclaimed that if Christ does not control our lives one hundred per cent, we might as well abdicate as Christians. This is a familiar

sentiment and the inevitable burden of any prophetic message. The preacher must be absolutely and whole-heartedly devoted to his profession. But at the same time he can not wholly ignore the sentiments and religion of what he calls the layman. Now a layman is precisely a person for whom religion does not come first in practice, whatever he may profess to the contrary. And the overwhelming majority of human beings are and will be laymen. What religion actually means to the layman deserves more consideration than what the clergyman says it ought to mean. In a layman's life religion is one of his minor concerns. Church activities, like political activities, take up some of his spare time, and tithes and taxes together are a relatively small item in the layman's budget. The fact that on occasion he may sacrifice all for his faith or his country does not contradict what I have said. Normally the layman is religious one day out of seven (to take a favorable and conventional figure) and, though this is not an intelligible basis for a scale of values and has actually nothing to do with a scale of values, it is a fact worth noting when we talk of the place of religion in life. Religion has a place in life, but not a fixed place. At times it is all-important; at others, irrelevant. Religion is one of the concerns of life. When it imagines itself superior to life, the supreme judge, the unconditional value, it merely undermines itself. Whether the layman thinks this or not, he acts accordingly. And I would regard it as a truism that religion exists for the layman, if this fact were not so flagrantly overlooked by the clergy. The layman has a sense of humor and takes it good naturedly when he is told before the offertory that all is too little to give to God (he probably believes it sincerely himself), but he puts in his little coin just the same. Worldly wisdom has the last word; the churches must take what they can get, regardless of their claims. Hence I repeat, in behalf of the layman, that though faith will move mountains and the layman will give a little time and money to be told so by the prophet, yet for one faithful mover of mountains there are hundreds of the faithful buried under them. It is after all the layman's business to decide how much energy he cares to devote to mountain moving and world shaking; and the clergyman has no right to complain if he fails to receive support.

Now, to return to our question, what satisfactions can the churches best give the layman for the little money and time he is willing to spend on them? The layman, however, interrupts at this point: "I do not approve of your identification of religion with the support of churches.

You do me an injustice, for, though I do not take the churches very seriously, I am really a religious man. My religious life is a personal and private affair, too intimate to be defined in terms of church activities and too pervasive to be measured." For the sake of my primary question I am tempted to yield to these claims and allow the layman his invisible holiness, admitting that I am here concerned only with public religion or cultus. But I must in passing at least express my sympathy here for the clergyman, who naturally and rightly, I think, is suspicious of the merely inner life. Privacy covers a multitude of pretenses. There was a time when to be religious meant to be a monk, to devote one's whole life publicly and socially to the worship of God. The current opposite extreme of making religion so inconspicuous that anyone can claim it is even less reasonable. If there were not a moral stigma attached to being irreligious, if a man felt as free to say that he does not care for religion as he feels free to admit that he is not musical, the number of self-styled religious persons would diminish noticeably. It seems reasonable that one can not be religious without doing something religious. Even the mystic justifies himself by writing volubly about the ineffable. The ordinary layman ought not object to having his religion estimated (by man, if not by God) in terms of public, visible piety. The Anglicans at one time imprisoned so-called Seekers and Familists for worshipping in their own homes without benefit of clergy. To-day any layman who could be caught at family prayers would be a model of piety. A domestic cultus, or even a purely personal cultus, would be public enough for purposes of my argument, since I am more concerned with any overt expression of piety than with the ministers' salaries. But the "religious" man who has nothing to do with religious institutions seems to me as much of an anomaly as the musical person who never uses musical instruments. In short, I am inquiring here into the opportunities that churches can offer laymen for being religious if and when they desire so to be.

Now, to return again to this, our first question. There are two services which churches must perform and which, therefore, represent a minimum program in view of the needs of typical modern communities and the satisfactions which other institutions are giving or fail to give: worship and social activities.

That public worship is a distinctive, if not the essential, function of

churches may seem to require no justification.[1] But few churchmen I know of are content with so modest a service. Especially Protestant ministers regard the priestly office as the more menial work in the service of God and aspire to the prophetic office. Even bishops and other church administrators are sufficiently preoccupied with their executive duties to lose touch with their priestly office and to vie with the prophets in looking down upon the priests. To worship well is no menial art, however, and requires the highest degree of skill, taste, and judgment. The extent to which church services and sacraments are either routine or impromptu performances is appalling to any one who has a sense of what public worship might be if it were cultivated with the same assiduity and conscious discipline that prevails in the secular arts. To invite laymen to the privilege of attending public worship would impress a minister as a histrionic gesture. He relies rather on the motive of duty: to use the "channels of grace" is a religious obligation, a "service" in the literal sense of the word. This conception of worship becomes increasingly difficult to defend intellectually and, what is more, is not effective in practice. In the long run, laymen will go to church if they enjoy it, and not if they merely must.

The more difficult problem of indicating what directions the art of worship should take I can not undertake to discuss here, nor am I at all confident that any useful generalizations on this subject are possible. For almost everything depends on local conditions, traditions, and taste. To impose an artificial standard, even when it is genuinely from above, is neither good taste nor good business. I venture several general principles, however, which are subject to various applications under varying conditions. First, the current standards in the secular arts must be respected. I say "respected," not copied. It serves no decent religious purpose to offer "church music" which must offend any reasonably educated musician. How many church choirs have I heard struggling with anthems that were painful even to them. Imperfect rendition by amateur choirs is not half so ruinous for worship (since it is a sincere effort at expression) as the taudry compositions handed to them by so-called church leaders, by church publishing houses, and other commercial firms. The choirs are to be pitied, for they must sing what they can get (unless they have the courage of their con-

[1] I refer to the excellent exposition of this subject by Professor Percy Hughes in his article, "Churches," *The Review of Religion*, vol. I, pp. 29–34.

victions), but the composers, compilers, and editors must bear the chief burden of blame for making church services unendurable to those who have any acquaintance with genuine or even jazz music. They *must* know better, and they usually offer as an apology that they must cater to the popular taste. This condescending attempt to be of service to the vulgar is certainly not a service to the worship of God and is usually much less appreciated by the vulgar than is supposed. Just now I am being forced to sing "Hymns for the Living Age" practically all of which come from the Gilded Age and are banal beyond words, to say nothing of tunes. I might pass on to architecture, poetry, rhetoric, and the other arts; but the reader can readily supply his own observations here. Suffice it to say that the worship of God is not enhanced by what would be inexcusable if offered for human enjoyment. Secondly, I suggest the principle that the distinction between the sacred and the secular must be observed. To have a regard for secular esthetic sensibilities is one thing; to introduce the theatre, the screen, the opera, the novel, and the press into the church service is another. There is a sacred art, with its own distinctive techniques and values; to cultivate this art requires the spirit of an artist, not an ingenious adaptation of entertainment to worship. Thirdly, worship should be addressed to God. This principle is particularly severe on sermons; it does not rule out the sermon from worship necessarily, but it rules out most sermons. The test of a true sermon as an act of worship is its tendency to *continue* the service of worship, continuing to draw the mind to God. A sermon usually terminates or interrupts communion with God and begins at best an act of instruction or persuasion, in which the mind of the preacher becomes central. A pulpit is by its very nature neither in the background nor impersonal; yet it ought to be both in order to be appropriate to public worship. I have no solution to offer for this problem, but I am at least stating a genuine difficulty which I have met repeatedly both in theoretical reflection and as a layman trying to worship. Lastly, the art of worship is becoming increasingly professionalized, at least in the typical urban community. Even in those denominations in whose public worship the congregation has taken an active and essential part, the congregation is rapidly becoming a passive audience. The habits formed in the arts of entertainment, in theatre, motion picture, radio, concert, and lecture hall (I might even add the schoolroom) are practically irresistible and must be taken into account by the churches, whether they like them or not.

Only the minimum demands can be made on a modern congregation's active participation in worship. The singing of hymns, reading of verses, even kneeling and bowing, are performed so grudgingly that priests and ministers would do better to count on the congregation for nothing at all except "appreciationi." The passing of religious folk art makes the demand for competent professional performance all the more urgent. Since the development of modern sacred art, comparable to the secular, implies a more expensive church service, I think we are forced to draw the inference that services of worship must in the future be for larger congregations and possibly less frequent than is the rule to-day. Even in rural regions the automobile and the radio will rapidly lessen the need for the large number of small church services that still prevails. In other words, I anticipate a diminishing demand for the lesser clergy and local talent, as far as public worship is concerned.

But the picture is almost the reverse when we look at what seems to me the second chief function that churches are called upon to perform to-day, the demand for participation in social activities. Being a member of a church means to many persons primarily being a member, participating in group activities. In how few other societies has a member an active part to play! Think of the average member of a political party, a labor union, a social club, an audience, a business corporation, a board of directors, a league for this or that. How many opportunities does he have actually to do something together with his fellow members? The extent to which most modern societies are unsociable is easily overlooked. Membership is a position, not an activity. The citizen, the stockholder, the amusement seeker, even the member of a co-operative, seldom actively co-operates; he can claim rights, but he seldom performs duties. A church, on the other hand, lives largely on its ability to keep its members busy in some church organization or other. Other societies take your money, the church takes your time. Most groups are organizations for some specific end and operate on the principle of dues and votes rather than of co-operative labor. The church operates less for a specific end than as a community of saints. Continual social life, group activities, friendly intercourse, petty but ever-present responsibilities, these make a church society more genuinely a society than most secular groups are.

Whether you believe with certain sociologists of religion that *Gemeinschaft* or *solidarité* is itself the divine reality, whether you think these "church activities" are essentially religious or not, makes little

difference to my argument at present. I am content to rely on the present fact that the churches are social centers offering genuine participation in group activities to thousands who find themselves without such opportunities in secular life; and on the fact that normal persons crave a certain amount of such satisfaction. Under these circumstances the churches must, even when they are little inclined to do so, be communions, communities, members sharing, rather than dividing labor. Now, as I have indicated above, public worship is becoming less and less a social activity. Like the institutions of entertainment, the activities of worship are carried on by a few professionals for the enjoyment of an audience. During the "service" the modern congregation is a mere aggregation. The social life of the church is to be found in its other "activities."

There are those who on philosophical or esthetic grounds imagine that this divorce between worship and activity is irrational; they should be "integrated." I see no sense in this argument at all. If other conditions favor, as it seems to me they do, the clear separation of sociability and worship, or, to use the technical terms, of the communion and the sacraments of the saints, why should philosophers object? If God tolerates duality, why can't we? The real problem, however, is not one of toleration, but of cultivation. Under present (and presumably near future) conditions the cultivation of each can best be carried on separately from the other.

Since sociability seems to be an end in itself, I think it matters less what kind of societies exist in a church than that they be genuinely social. In general, I believe that when a missionary society conducts a "sociable" it cares about as much for missions as those who organize a charity ball care for charity. Missionary societies, Sunday schools, ladies' aids, Christian Endeavors, Daughters of the King, etc., etc., exist primarily not for an end but for sociability's sake. And it makes comparatively little difference (except financially) what these societies aim to do, so long as they do it together. And, at the risk of being called cynical, I think that one reason why missions, benevolences, and other expensive forms of church activity are suffering is because there are more sociable things to do than raising money. Now that the churches are hospitable toward athletics, dancing, entertainments, and other delightful forms of association that former generations condemned as worldly vanities, the "*work* of the Lord," that is, raising money for missionaries, schools, publications, etc., must necessarily suffer. "Ac-

tivities" are seldom downright work. There is much labor and trouble in serving a church dinner, putting on a play, distributing baskets to the poor, and other "community services," but such efforts are enjoyed because they differ radically from the daily work. "Six days shalt thou labor," six nights shalt thou be "active," and the seventh, forsooth, is the day and night of rest.

Some such pattern of a layman's life the minister must face, whether it seems reasonable to him or not. And to this as raw material he must seek to make his church add form and significance both by its art of worship and its opportunities for social participation. This is a minimum program and requires, on the whole, more brains than money.

THE APPRECIATION OF HEBREW POETRY

Earle Bennett Cross

Perennial is the interest of the Christian world in its great book, the Bible. Yet the English Bible does not stand in permanent form. Indeed it can hardly be that any translation of this classic can serve the purposes of all generations of Bible lovers. Since the English Bible is a translation, lovers of it will ever be busy with drawing its innermost glories out in fuller glow. One great translation has achieved the proportions of a classic in itself, the King James Version. The twentieth century also has produced a series of translations, some of which will endure the tests of changing attitudes of mind and modes of expression. Others are doomed to an ephemeral notice. A pioneer in the modes of modern translators was Professor R. G. Moulton, whose "Modern Readers' Bible" is still a volume to be cherished. In this work a sincere effort was made to give to the English reader a rendering in which poetic structures might be discerned by the usual arrangements of verse. There was, furthermore, in both prose and poetic passages a paragraphing and use of quotation marks, the absence of which in the standard versions makes the path of the reader vague. Another outstanding edition is that by Professor James Moffatt. This presents the entire Bible in the mode of a single translator, a master of English style. The American Translation is also of high grade, although it suffers somewhat from the uneven quality which is inevitable in a work produced by several writers.

In all of these excellent modern renderings, however, there looms a great darkness. The tradition of the Authorized Version is obviously strong in the minds of all the translators. It may be that this influence forbade them to introduce into their renderings of the poetic sections any rhythm beyond that of high-moded prose. The constant disagreement of scholars as to the nature and form of Hebrew poetry also may have forbidden even the expert to attempt rhythm. As successive versions have been presented to the public we have sought eagerly those portions which we knew to be great poetry, only to turn away unsatisfied by the draught.

Various explanations we have given to ourselves for our dissatisfaction. Naturally, we have said that our taste for the Authorized Version and its classic English has set our minds against anything

that differs therefrom. We have wondered at times whether the nature of Semitic poetry may not be the cause for our distaste. Perhaps the Hebrews had nothing like our rhythms.

A great host of men and women has neither cared, nor dared, to expect in their Scriptures anything in the manner of literary styles. They have been fashioned in mind as he among the well-known rabbis of our time who responded to the hearing of some Psalms in rhythmic mode, "If this be right, then I have lost my Psalm-book." Sacred writings and literary modes have been deemed mutually antagonistic. Even some of the greatest interpreters of the Old Testament have declared themselves of the opinion that if the great prophets of Israel be found to be poets, their work will cease to have value as religious oracles. Lovers of our English poets should have little sympathy with such prejudice.

The times are changing. We are on the verge of new insights into the poetry of the Bible, most of which lies in the Old Testament. Ere long there will be spread before us a translation in which the poetry will be rendered in such wise as to convey much of the cadence and rhythm of the original. This added touch will slake the literary thirst and the cup whence we drink will be worthy the glorious nature of the draught. All noble thought tends to shape itself into noble form. A recent publication sold itself by the millions on the representation that it contained something of this kind only to prove itself like Job's friends "deceitful as a brook as the channel of brooks that pass away."

In the scholarly world it is rapidly appearing that the structures of Hebrew poetry are quite other than those of the more familiar Greek and Latin world. Yet its own fashions and modes will win their way into the hearts of those who have literary tastes quite as surely as have the peninsular poetries. The translation of Hebrew modes is much simpler than the rendering of classic Greek and Latin verse forms and metres. In point of fact, it is becoming evident that Hebrew verse is not measured by feet—has no real metre as such with precise and tailored forms of iambics, trochaics, and the like. It comes in simpler rhythms like some of the old English verse of the ballads. Its modes can be conveyed quite readily into English.[1] The lines are formed on the natural stress of speech without much regard for the number of unaccented syllables. Only the obsessions of scholars have

[1] See Coleridge's "Christabel" for an example of such patterns from the pen of an English poet.

postponed the recognition of this fact. We mean obsessions from the classic Greek and Latin sources. There exist voluminous works which now appear ludicrous in their efforts to discover the modes of Homer and Horace in the Old Testament. These volumes were composed within the century. The days of such mistaken zeal are passing. The world of scholars is coming to agreement that these Hebrews had their own peculiar poetic structures which differ from those of the other great poetry of the Mediterranean world in which they were produced, and yet bear aloft banners of dignity and worth.

The lack of exact metres in Hebrew poetry is but one peculiarity of many. Ever since the days of Lowth[2] it has been recognized that Hebrew poets rhymed the thought. This was hidden under the ponderous term *parallelismus membrorum.* The adequate representation of this fact by translators has been delayed for many reasons. Until the forms of English renderings comprehend this feature, the shadows will remain to obscure the true glory of Israel's poets.

The primary element of all verse is the verse, or as it is often called, the line. While there is occasionally an isolated line in Hebrew poetry, the fundamental element is in the nature of a couplet. The relation between the component elements in the Hebrew couplet justifies the description of it as a rhyming of the thought. The older term "parallelism of members" has led to futile, pedantic discussions with regard to many couplets in which the second line does not parallel the first in thought, but rather continues, or supplements, it. The idea of parallelism can be applied too strictly. Hebrew verse often finds its antiphony in the supplementary mode as well as in the complementary. We prefer to obviate such disputes by use of the term "balance of thought" rather than "parallelism."

The reader who does not know Hebrew may relish a few samples of this antiphonal mode taken from the book of Proverbs. We take the liberty of modifying slightly the wording of the usual versions in order to introduce into the illustrations at the same time the rhythmic cadence.

'Tis sport to a fool to do evil;
So is wisdom to men of sense. (10:23)

As a ring of gold in a swine's snout
Is fair woman without good taste. (11:22)

[2] Lowth, De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum. (1753)

The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord,
To probe his innermost parts. (20:27)

Crucibles for silver, and furnaces for gold,
And a man is tried by his praise. (27:21)

After the novelty has somewhat worn off, the reader will find delight in this charming antiphony of ideas. It must disclose to him further the lofty realm in which these Hebrew poets wrought.

This balance of thought is foreign to the usual modern and western poetic art; but no more so than are other modes of expression in Hebrew. It is bewildering to the student who attempts to master the Hebrew language to discover that the verb forms are not shaped on the scheme of time. The major structures in the conjugation of Hebrew verbs are based upon such modes as certainty of action, contingency of action, repetition of action, causal connections, and reflexive forms. The only certain indication of time will be found in the context in which the verb lies. The very same verb form in different contexts may refer to the past, to the present, or to the future. This is not at all like our English and the classic peninsular languages. Dr. Moffatt in his translation of the Old Testament has eliminated fifty per cent of the "shall" and "will" forms of the Authorized Version. This is due to the better understanding of the peculiarity of Hebrew verbs. We may expect that future translations shall take account of the peculiar poetic structures as well. Too long have scholars been approaching the poetry of the Old Testament with preconceptions drawn from the ancient Greek and Latin modes. There can be nothing but cultural gain in the invasion of these original and challenging ideas in their native Hebrew garb. There will be no loss to the spiritual worth of the Old Testament; but rather will noble thought gleam with added lustre in its native forms.

At this point we wish to state the principles of Hebrew rhythmic structures.[3]

1. The principle feature of Hebrew poetry is the balancing, or rhyming of ideas. In general the balance is secured by repetition,

[3] Professor T. H. Robinson has set forth these principles in a recent article in Zeitschrift für die Alttestmentliche Wissenschaft, 1936, pp. 28–43, under the caption, "Some Principles of Hebrew Metrics," with which in general we are in agreement.

by contrasting, or by extension. Lowth employed in describing these modes the terms "synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic."

Note: To these modes G. B. Gray adds three types—complete, incomplete with compensation, and incomplete without compensation. T. H. Robinson would add two more types—internal and external parallelism.[4] These additions of Gray and Robinson are hardly more than distinctions within the classification of Lowth based on arrangement of material.

Note: This feature is commonly called "parallelism" (*parallelismus membrorum*), but such a term does not adequately care for those forms of balancing by extension, the "synthetic" type, in which parallelism is not evident.

2. The smallest unit in Hebrew poetry consists of a word, or a word group, which would have naturally a single major stress of pronunciation.

Note: There is no such regularity of succession of stressed and unstressed syllables as that which inheres in metre as such. The use of the term *metre,* therefore, in connection with Hebrew poetry is questionable.

Note: In Hebrew a word often comprises what in English would be called a phrase, or a verb with pronominal subject and object together, or a noun with pronominal modifiers, e. g., in-the-earth, he-created-them, his-earth.

Note: In Hebrew poetry some words are negligible in the rhythmic scheme, especially monosyllabic prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, and exclamations, unless these are of marked importance in the thought.[5]

3. Rhythmic units of a single natural stress unite with others to form a longer thought unit which stands in balanced relation with another similar thought unit. Such a unit we call a *verse.* The balancing of two such verses we call a *couplet;* and three together we call a *triad,* etc.

Note: The current usage defines what we call a verse as a *stichos,* and the combination of two or more *stichoi* is called a *line.* We object to the term *stichos* not only because it is Hellenic, but in that it is not intelligible to the average reader. We object to the term *line* in that it does not bring out the important idea of balance which produces the feature.

Note: Rarely does a verse stand by itself without a balancing verse, but there are poetic effects which demand just this phenomenon. T. H. Robinson maintains that this is impossible.[6]

[4] Robinson, op. cit. p. 31.
[5] Ibid, p. 37.
[6] Robinson, op. cit. p. 31.

4. Larger combinations of material such as stanzas are determined also by unity of thought; occasionally there is further distinguishment by refrains, etc.

Note: The attempts which have been made to reduce all Hebrew poetry to quatrains, and other arbitrary numerical equalization of distinct elements, are dubious as being too much after the modes of the peninsular languages and their metres. The Hebrew structures are more free and elastic.

5. The stress pattern of the verses in combination may be identical throughout a poem, or there may be a great variety of patterns.

Note: The usage in describing a stress pattern is to separate the numerals which indicate the number of stresses in the successive verses by colons, e. g., 2:2 indicates a couplet of two stresses in each verse, 3:2 indicates a couplet of three stresses in the first verse and two in the second, 3:2:3 indicates a triad with three, two, and three stresses in the successive verses.

Note: The book of Job is an example of the almost invariable use of couplets in verses of three stresses. Other poets employ a great variety of stress patterns. Possibly Isaiah is the exponent of the most varied forms; he has the frequent phenomenon of a verse of three or four stresses balanced against two shorter verses which in turn balance each other, i. e., 3:2:2, or 4:2:2. In a few instances Isaiah also features a couplet in which the last phrase of the second verse is balanced by a corresponding phrase in a sort of split ending. This might be indicated by the notation 3:4:(2), where the parenthesis would show that the last two stresses parallel only the last two stresses of the four-stress verse.

After this more or less technical description of the modes of Hebrew poetry we shall conclude with two illustrating poems which may serve to arouse the expectations of readers of the Bible for the renderings of the future.

A very ancient lyric in the Bible is the song of Lamech, seventh in line from Cain, the first murderer. In this brief poem appears a striking variety of rhythmic structure to give cutting edge to Lamech's song of revenge.

Give heed to my voice, wives of Lamech![7]
Give ear to my words!
Yea, I slay a man for a wound,
Or a youth for a buffet!

[7] The rendering here given differs from that of many translators who mistake the words "Adah and Zillah" to be part of the poem.

Well, if Cain be avenged seven-fold,
Then seventy and seven-fold Lamech!
(Gen. 4:23, 24)

Our paragraphing aims to distinguish the three couplets which compose the lyric, and also to set off the third couplet as against the other two. This distinction is also served by the rhythm. The last couplet has three stresses in either verse, and would be noted as 3:3; the other couplets are of the pattern 3:2. There is support for the fiendish glee of this last couplet, horrid and barbarous as it is, in the triple beat of its rhythm.

The other illustration is the brilliant dramatic lyric in the sixth chapter of Micah. It is to the credit of Professor R. G. Moulton that in his "Modern Readers' Bible" he presented this poem as a dramatic lyric. What explanation can more recent translators give for their failure to follow his proper lead? Unfortunately, the study of Hebrew rhythms had not proceeded far enough in Dr. Moulton's time for him to carry this into his translation.

The poem is descriptive of an imaginative trial of Israel before the mountains, impanelled as jury. God makes his charge as plaintiff, after which the defendant, Israel, with head bowed in confession, inquires what he can do to right himself with his God. Then follows the verdict of the mountains. With this brief foreword, there should be no need of marginal indications as to shift of speakers. A single line of introduction stands at the beginning as an exception to the rule that Hebrew poetry is built upon antiphony. This verse may be taken as prose, but it seems to have a rhythmic structure after all.

Pray give heed to the word of the Lord!

Arise, plead your cause 'fore the mountains;
Let the hills give heed to your voice.
  Hear, O mountains, the case of the Lord!
  Give ear, O foundations of earth!
For the Lord hales his folk into court;
Against Israel pleads he.

O my folk, to you what ill have I done?
In what have I bored you? Give answer!
  I brought you from Egypt's land,
  From the house of bondage freed you.
I sent before you Moses,
And Aaron and Miriam.

O my folk, recall what mischief Balak devised;
And how Balaam, Beor's son, made answer to him.
From Shittim to Gilgal,
To come to know the good deeds of the Lord.

With what shall I face the Lord?
Before God on high bow me down?
Shall I face him with holocausts,
With calves a full year old?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousand rams,
With myriad streams of oil?
Shall I give for my trespass my firstborn,
The fruit of the womb for the sin of my soul?

He has told you, O man, the good way!
Yea, what does the Lord expect from you
But to render justice,
And love to be kind,
And humbly to walk with your God. (Micah 6: 1–8)

There is some archaic allusion in the poem, which may require advice from the initiated. Those who are familiar with Hebrew history will recall the leadership of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam at the time of the exodus from Egypt. Not so readily may the reader recall the attempt of Balak, king of Moab, to hire the wizard, Balaam, to curse the host of Israel, only to be thwarted by hearing a blessing from Balaam's lips instead of a curse. Still more obscure is the allusion to Shittim and Gilgal. The former was the last encampment of the Hebrew people before they crossed the Jordan into the land of promise. The latter was the encampment where first they rested on promised soil. Such an allusion would touch the fancy of the average Hebrew as the phrase "from Plymouth Rock to the Golden Gate" moves us in modern America.

The final couplet of this lyric is one of the passages of the Bible most often quoted. It is a studied summary of the meaning of religion. In itself it shines with moral and spiritual discernment. When it is seen in its proper setting, however, its truth glows with brighter glory.

The reader may need to repeat the poem in its rhythmic form several times in order to familiarize himself with the Hebrew mode. Gradually the flavor will come to appeal to him, and he will crave more of the same for his literary taste.

A study of the stress patterns in this poem is revelatory of the nature of such arrangements in Hebrew poetry in general. After the single verse of introduction a weighing of the dramatic turns of the thought indicates that there are four stanzas of varying number of verses. The first serves to include the call to court and contains six verses in three couplets of the pattern 3:3; 3:3; 3:2. This pattern is fairly regular, as the only divergence from the pattern 3:3 is in the last couplet where the final verse drops to two stresses. This may serve by way of bringing the stanza to a turn, as it seems to do often. The nature of the material in the stanza is formal and without any of the dramatic elements which are found in the succeeding stanzas.

The second stanza sets forth the accusation of the Lord, or in terms of juridical procedures the plaintiff's charge. It contains five couplets of the pattern 4:3; 3:3; 3:2; 5:5; 2:4. Whereas the couplets in the first stanza were of the repetitious nature, here they exemplify every one of the three major types, repetition, contrast, and extension. The first three seem to be repetition, the fourth is built upon contrast and the last is one of extension. The analytic processes of many scholars would doubtless break the fourth couplet up into many short *stichoi* of fragmentary thought content; but we are sure that the right analysis must consider each verse a thought unit of perfect form balancing the material in the other by contrast. We, therefore, maintain that there are here but two verses (*stichoi*) in the proper sense.

> O my folk, recall what mischief Balak devised;
> And how Balaam, Beor's son, made answer to him.

Any analysis which breaks this up into smaller fragments lays itself open to the charge of undue devotion to classical metre with its caesuræ and feet. This must result in intricate discussions which lead nowhere and only serve to confuse the simple processes of rhythm which are the mark of Hebrew verse. Note how the pattern of long five-stress verses serves to give weight to this item in the charge of the Lord which recalls a most dramatic and threatening event in the story of the exodus. This touch would be lost in the dust raised by breaking the verses (lines) up into short stichoi.

The question which rises in connection with the third couplet has but one solution in our opinion.

> I sent before you Moses and Aaron and Miriam.

This might be retained as a single verse; but this would violate a prin-

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ciple which is generally sound, namely that the Hebrew does not as a rule allow a single verse to stand by itself. Since the sentence can be broken into two parts which balance each other rather well, the natural solution is that which we have adopted. This reduces the stress pattern of the couplet to 3 : 3. Devotees of the theory of equalization of lines would violate the delicate balances of thought, if they retained this as a single line of five stresses to accompany the next two in a triad of five-stress lines. The desire to secure precisions of equal stress patterns, an obsession from classical traditions, must here give way to the major claims of thought balances.

Some would suppose that a verb has been omitted by some error in the first verse of the last couplet. This might raise the pattern thereof from 2 : 4 to a possible 3 : 4, but without any gain of appreciable worth. The mode of 2 : 4 which seems to us the right one concludes this stanza of the charge of the plaintiff with a rising, or swelling, motif which is in contrast with the falling motif with which the first stanza concluded. This detail in itself is most apt in the rhythmic effects with which the poet is supporting his ideas. The reader can secure judgment on this feature by reading the stanza over to himself several times and observing the effect of the varied stress patterns. While we are arguing the point on the basis of the English translation, one who can read the Hebrew will find that the effects are similar in that text.

The stress pattern of the third stanza is even as far as the poet's art permitted him to work without reducing the stanza to monotony. The pattern as we see it is 3 : 3; 2 : 3; 4 : 3; 3 : 4. The effect of this slight variance in the stress patterns of the successive couplets colors the rhythm in our judgment, and at the same time avoids the dramatic thrust or sharp divergence which would not be appropriate to such a plea of guilty. There is no such violent divergence as that which marked the fourth couplet of the preceding stanza. The reader should note again the rising mode of the final couplet which swells out in accord with the poignancy of the anguish which the poet portrays in the defendant who can make no plea, but can only long to make atonement for sin.

In the final stanza which contains the verdict of the mountains, there is in our judgment a triad of verses at the climax, and the stress pattern is 3 : 4; 2 : 2 : 3. It is possible to reduce the last triad to a couplet in the form

But to render justice, and love to be kind,
And humbly to walk with your God.

A fine appreciation of the prophetic insights of this poet, however, compels the critic to give each clause in the definition of religion an equal weight. The arrangement as a triad does this perfectly. It also brings the lyric to a rising climax in the way of a crescendo, which is further supported by the three stresses of the last verse in balance against the two stresses of the two preceding.

The analysis of the stress patterns of this beautiful and artistic lyric must appeal to the literary taste, and awaken interest in this novel type of poetic work which the Hebrews produced. Not all Hebrew poems are of the supreme quality and art which marks this gem. Nevertheless, there is obviously quite as much genius and blending of form and spirit in such poetic art as there is in the more familiar and more mechanical measures of the classical literature. There is a lilting swing for joy, a dragging step for sorrow, staccato thrusts for ecstasy or fevered wrath, and weighted length for doom or instruction. Some effects the Hebrew art can achieve which lie beyond the reach of Greek or Latin metres.

We have had all too little attention given to literary modes in the translations which have been current. The efforts of scholars have often been no more than those of dealers in a butcher's shop, giving the reader piecemeal offerings in texts, or chopping to pieces by questionable critical methods literary structures of living beauty. Hebrew poetry is worthy of as much care in its presentation as the work of the poets of Greece and Rome. Even without adequate rendering of its forms it has won a hearing. It is water of life in cups of beauty. Let us have the beauty of its form presented as well as its spirit.

BOOKS OF INTEREST TO MINISTERS

The Holiness of Jesus. Arthur Davis Martin. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1936. Pp. 251. $2.50.

According to Mr. Martin "At the present time the character of Jesus is not regarded by all his professed followers as beyond damaging criticism, and the consequence of the hesitation noticeable in certain quarters is confusion in faith and weakness in ethics." One cannot help raising the question as to what the "damaging criticism" of the "character of Jesus" can be. The reviewer was of the opinion that in the midst of the white light of a most rigorous criticism of gospel sources and of interpretations of Jesus he had emerged with a character more vigorous and triumphant than even the theologians of an earlier day had dared to posit.

The author is evidently at pains to demand for Jesus a "holiness" different in kind and degree from that which one can attain in an environment of moral struggle no matter how victorious one may be in that struggle. To achieve his purpose he proceeds to a sketch of the development of the concept of holiness from its primitive *tabus* through the Hebrew contribution to that development. But the New Testament is the supreme treasure house in which is to be discovered the real meaning of the holiness of Jesus. Accordingly a considerable portion of the book is devoted to an investigation of the sources of our knowledge of Jesus and of certain critical views of those sources. One turns from these sections with a lack of any sense of direction. Apparent deference is on occasion paid to the historical approach to the gospels, but when need arises there is quick resort to interpretation which if not entirely allegorical is blood-brother to it. If it were not for the serious purpose and tone of the book one might be inclined to class some of these interpretations as "whimsical." They are, perhaps, not such but many of them are far from convincing.

The author has mistaken what the gospels are and has also possibly mistaken the nature of the "holiness" which may be ascribed to Jesus and, indeed, to the God of Jesus. While a motive of the book, namely, to suggest "the foundation of a common confession of faith" in "an idea which involves the reality of God in Jesus" may be an admirable one, it is questionable whether the method of the writer is of much help in this regard. "Holiness" whether in Jesus or in God himself must, if it is to have reality for us, be based ultimately not on some mysterious given quality but on the exercise of volition and choice in moral situations. E. W. P.

Studies in the Life of Jesus. Irwin Ross Beiler. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1936. Pp. 319. $2.50.

This book attempts much for a volume of its size. To cover certain essential features of the physical, social and religious environment of Jesus, to deal with the difficult problems regarding the sources of our knowledge of him, and to treat of the activities and teachings of Jesus, not to mention digressions on such matters as miracles, within approximately three hun-

dred pages is no mean endeavor. One must be prepared for brevity of presentation in such a volume. And one gets it here. At times the question arises as to whether compression of material has not been carried so far as to endanger effectiveness. But the book is primarily a text for college underclassmen and in a secondary way for casual readers. As a text used in classes the material would doubtless be supplemented by lectures; and it requires such supplementation. The author himself admits in the preface the "superficial" character of parts of the presentation.

There is much in the work which is well expressed and which is of undoubted value for the purposes for which it was planned. The attempt to put so much in a book of these page limitations results in not a few statements which in their present form are vague and at times without clear direction. A few examples are: "There is every reason to regard Mark's picture of Jesus as trustworthy," (one wonders as to the exact meaning of the last word in that quotation); "Q saw the kingdom arriving at some time in the future; and while this is evidence that Jesus likely held such views, they seem not to have been in his main thought stream." Interpretation of the parables is often so condensed as to be reduced to the deriving of homilizing values to the exclusion of consideration of the early use of these traditions. The approach to Jesus is only partly historical; it is also partly influenced by theological interpretation of him. This may possibly be considered the best approach for college men, but the questions that many of them would like answered are not fully met in this volume. One hopes that they are considered in the lectures which supplement the printed discussion. A larger volume, or better still two volumes, would have helped both the author and his readers.

A gratifying feature of the book is the addition of an excellent index and an even more welcome appendix giving a comprehensive and well chosen list for supplementary reading. E. W. P.

Our Translated Gospels. Charles Cutler Torrey. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936. Pp. lx+172. $2.25.

In a very real sense this book is a sequel to the volume published by Dr. Torrey in 1933 under the title *The Four Gospels: A New Translation.* In this work the author gave what was claimed to be a translation of the Aramaic original of our gospels. The claims of the writer that there were written Aramaic gospels immediately behind our Greek gospels of which the latter were direct translations were doubtfully received by the majority of scholars competent to deal with the matter. The thesis ran contrary to certain results in the field of gospel criticism, results which were the sifted product of much careful research. In addition to this, the position taken by Dr. Torrey required the very early Palestinian origin of our four canonical gospels. He did not shrink from that requirement and place the writing of these gospels as prior to 60 A. D. Even those who are kindly disposed toward his work hesitate at this point.

To meet the many criticisms which his position has provoked the author and translator undertakes to give in the volume under review the "evi-

dence" which supports his claim. There is a preface and a lengthy introduction. One is reluctant to criticize in a manner which even approaches severity a scholar whose earlier work made significant contributions to certain phases of Old Testament study. Nevertheless, in fairness to possible readers some things must be said. Apart from the irrelevancy of extensive portions of the introduction one is met with alarming frequency by statements which either beg the question or which are not only unsupported by evidence but run contrary to much more probable views. A few examples are selected. "The material of our Four Gospels is all Palestinian, and the language in which it was originally written is Aramaic, then the principal language of the land; with the exception of the first two chapters of Luke, which were composed in Hebrew." (Page ix.)

"The Greek of the Gospels has all of the characteristics of the language of the LXX; there is no other parallel. The attempt to show something similar in the papyri utterly fails; nothing at all comparable to the language of the Four Gospels has been or can be produced. If anything really similar should be found in literary papyri (a happening not even remotely probable), it would be recognized, no generally accepted doctrine forbidding, as a translation; while the comparison with the Greek of the vulgar papyri is merely ridiculous." (Pages liii-liv.) How could such outstanding experts in the language as Deissman, Moulton, Milligan, Burton, Goodspeed, Robertson, and a host of others have been so completely misled by the language of the papyri!

It seems unfortunate that Professor Torrey continues to connect certain valuable features of his studies with untenable theories. Not a few of his suggested readings and translations have merit. But they remain, and probably must remain, in the area of conjecture. As conjectures they might gain acceptance for the help which they might bring to the understanding of some statements in the gospels. But to go beyond this to a written Aramaic original of which our Greek gospels are immediate translations—well, there are simply too many hurdles in the way. The distance between the existence of both an Aramaic and a Greek oral tradition on the one hand and the claim of written Aramaic prototypes, with the necessary implications, on the other is still too great for sober thought to traverse in the way suggested by the author. The book is not helpful toward a solution of the problems of gospel origins. E. W. P.

The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. (The Moffatt New Testament Commentary.) R. H. Strachan. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1935. Pp. xl+149. $3.50.

This is another volume in the useful commentary being steadily brought to completion under the editorship of Professor James Moffatt. The writer of this book is Professor of New Testament Language and Literature in Westminster College, Cambridge, and he maintains the British tradition for careful and balanced scholarship. The commentary opens with an introduction of some forty pages. There is no essential problem which the document raises which is left unconsidered. With no unneces-

sary words the writer deals incisively with the questions of the integrity of the letter, of Paul's opponents at Corinth, and treats as well the vexed problem of his relationships with the church in that city. The facts are fairly and fearlessly faced and the conclusions are sanely drawn. Following the best opinion he concludes that parts of three letters are to be found in this document.

The commentary is abreast of the best that this series has shown and that is no mean commendation. A useful feature is the inclusion of discussions on ten points of importance in the thought of the epistle. The work forms a welcome addition to our literature in English which this writing of Paul has called forth. E. W. P.

The Pastoral Epistles. (The Moffatt New Testament Commentary.) Ernest F. Scott. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1936. Pp. xxxviii+153. $3.50.

This volume of the Moffatt Commentary finds Professor Scott at his best. The work manifests the poise, the insight and the careful judgment which mark such indispensable contributions as his *The Fourth Gospel, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The Apologetic of the New Testament, The New Testament To-Day.* In an introduction of brief compass he treats every question of importance regarding the two letters to Timothy and that to Titus. He is in agreement with the concensus of opinion in denying their authorship to Paul, and the evidence on which he arrives at this conclusion is excellently expressed. He also takes the position that some fragments of genuine Pauline notes have been incorporated. This too is in accord with the best thought on the problem. Mr. Scott shows wisdom in his exercise of caution in the matter of placing exact limitations on these Pauline fragments. The sections on the various purposes of these documents and on their historical value will be found most useful for studious but busy ministers and for thoughtful laymen. The same steady judgment is manifest in the comments on the text itself, and the commentary as a whole forms an accession of no little importance to our literature on the three documents generally known as the Pastoral Epistles. E. W. P.

What Is the Faith? Nathaniel Micklem. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1937. Pp. 227. $2.00.

The Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, who is already well known on this side of the water through his contributions to theological literature, has produced in the present work what many will no doubt consider his most incisive volume. The present work, however, represents a positive recession from more advanced positions taken in certain of his earlier works to a view much more in harmony, in both form and spirit, with that of conservative orthodoxy. While Professor Micklem says that men should be free as to the form in which they will state the faith, if only they make sure of the substance of the faith, the logic of his argument seems to be that one cannot have the substance without its carrying with it also pretty much the traditional form. It is true that he inclines to doubt whether

it may not be possible to tell the gospel story without affirming the virgin birth and the physical resurrection as physiological facts. But for him all Christian dogma is summed up in the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is all involved in the "mystery of the Incarnation." So to affirm puts very positive limitations upon the proposal to restate Christian doctrine in the language of today, which is a thing that Principal Micklem essays to do. Admitting as he does that much of the form of the Christian story is mythological, Dr. Micklem none the less feels that the essence of the story (the evangel) is to be found in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. This is essential Christianity; nothing else can be. In other words, Christianity is a faith once for all delivered to the saints; it is not a life or a movement which necessarily leaves its dead past behind. H. B. R.

God Is My Adventure. Rom Landau. London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, Ltd., 1935. Pp. xiii+426.

Attracted by "those regions of truth which the official religions and sciences are shy of exploring," Rom Landau, a contemporary sculptor of well-known attainments, became an investigator of occult ways to truth and to "God." He takes us with him down through the years in his successive contacts with Count Keyserling, Stefan George, Rudolf Steiner, Krishnamurti, Shri Meher Baba, Principal George Jeffreys, Frank Buchman, P. D. Ouspensky, and Gurdjieff The first three introduce us to "The Unknown Continent"—a sort of fourth dimension of the spiritual life, one might say. The next six constitute "The English Adventure," defined as such purely by the fact that the experiences were all had in England. Incidentally they directly included two contacts with current patterns within Christianity: the Four-square Gospel, represented by Principal Jeffreys; and the Oxford Groups, as seen through the personality of Buchman. In the third part of the book, "Fulfilments," we come back, after some years, and in succession, to Keyserling, Steiner, and Krishnamurti, who seem to have made the deepest impression upon our guide and to have contributed more to his faith. In the "Conclusion" he discusses "the Living God" in the light of these experiences. He believes that future generations may well call these three "the prophets of our time." As describing vividly a number of the religious quests which in our time have taken people beyond the beaten path to the churches, the book has value. H. B. R.

The Local Church. Albert W. Beaven. New York: The Abingdon Press, 1937. Pp. 254. $1.25.

President Beaven is constantly placing Christian workers, and ministers in particular, in his debt thru a growing series of volumes in which he shares with them not only his preaching ministry but also his experience in organization and administration. In no other of his books does he do this more fully and helpfully than in this, his latest. Back of the book lie years of service in a variety of relationships which called for the highest executive skill. These extended from the pastorate of various types of churches, including twenty years with the Lake Avenue Baptist Church of

Rochester, N. Y., thru a wide range of administrative offices in denominational and interdenominational work, culminating in the presidency of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. For eight years now as president and professor he has been engaged in the work of training ministers. So it is no mere theorist or arm chair philosopher who here discusses with us problems of church management. After a careful discussion of the real purpose and task of the church in which difficulties within and without are frankly faced, the author proceeds in the second part of the book to consider ways and means whereby, thru the organization, that task and purpose can be achieved. No phase of the promotional work of the church is left untouched, and what is presented has been tested and proven effective in actual practice. That minister or church officer must surely be dull who cannot find here helpful and constructive suggestions which will assist him to successful achievement in his own situation. That is, indeed, a great merit of the book. It not only shows how one man has done it but also discloses principles and methods valid for every man engaged in similar tasks. J. F. V.

Jawaharlal Nehru: An Autobiography. London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1936. Pp. xiv+618.

Jawaharlal Nehru is President of the Indian National Congress, and next to M. K. Gandhi the most important and influential Indian Nationalist. Born of an ancient Kashmir Brahman line, son of the famous Pandit Motilal Nehru, the younger Nehru was heir to privilege well out of the reach of the average Indian. His parents sent him to England for his education, at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge. After his science tripos examination and the taking of his degree with second class honors, in 1910, he remained in London for a couple of years, where in 1912 he was called to the Bar. Soon after his return to India, the World War absorbed all interest. In 1916 he met Gandhi; in that same year he married. The turn of events drew his father and himself inevitably into the Nationalist movement. In 1920 and 1921 he wandered among the peasants, and was powerfully impressed by their unfortunate lot. Thereafter he was always looking beyond political nationalism to social readjustments which should give the masses of India their chance. As an active Nationalist, he was in frequent disfavor with Government, and has spent a good share of his time since 1921 in prison. A new India, an India in some sense socialist in its organization, rather than the law, became his vocation. As Secretary of the Congress Committee and later as President of the Congress, he has concerned himself with the political freedom and the social renovation of India. The present volume rightly adds to the title the phrase "with musings on recent events in India." The range of these musings is very wide; they deal not only with the political panorama which unfolded with the years, but with the personality of Gandhi, whom—for all his warm personal attachment—he criticizes sharply at certain points; with the future of India as an agrarian land but with an increasing industrialization; with religion, whose institutional expressions induce sharp antipathies within him; with social theory—

democracy, fascism, socialism, communism—where he finds himself socialistic in his personal views, but critical of most expressions of radical socialism. Here is a fine, cultured, sensitive, devoted soul, whom circumstance and his own commitments have made a prisoner of hope—the hope of a better day for India, and for the world. His musings run the gamut of a cultured man's interests. It is a revealing record. H. B. R.

Worship. Evelyn Underhill. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937. Pp. xxi+350. $3.00.

No other volume with which this reviewer is acquainted presents such a comprehensive and thorough going study of worship. The author's knowledge of the history of religion with its manifold expressions, her philosophical and religious insights, and most of all her devout religious temper adequately qualify her for the task she essays, and accomplishes so worthily in this book. What essentially is worship? By what means is it promoted? These are the topics for discussion in a succession of chapters in which there is careful, critical discussion, not only of the nature of worship but also of the use and value of ritual, symbol, sacrament and sacrifice. The Eucharist Miss Underhill regards as the central act of Christian worship. She traces its orgin and development and then offers an interpretation which includes six distinct elements. Of these the most significant are Fellowship, the Divine Presence, and "The Food of Eternal Life." Personal and corporate worship are studied in their relation to each other, and the author then proceeds to review the great historic forms of corporate worship. Each is sympathetically appraised and its contribution to the common heritage of worship indicated. The church greatly needs to appreciate that heritage and to utilize its values. I know of nothing that can better assist to that end than a careful study of this scholarly treatise. J. F. V.

Concerning the Ministry. John Oman, D. D. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937. Pp. viii+180. $2.25.

Here, to begin with, is delightful reading. Dr. Oman simply chats with his students in a familiar, informal way about the work of the ministry. He holds up a mirror, and that will be an altogether exceptional minister who does not find here some reflection of himself, particularly of his foibles. Humor breaks thru frequently, but there is much that is serious. Even the humor, for that matter is serious in its purpose. The twenty-two chapters present a thorough and thoughtful treatment of the tasks of the ministry with special emphasis on the teaching and preaching functions. Out of an extended experience, interpreted and evaluated with a sober common sense that excites our admiration, the author brings a wealth of practical suggestions calculated to instruct and reinforce any minister who will give them consideration. I deem it quite the best of recent books in this field. J. F. V.

La Robe Sans Couture. Robert Farelly. Lens: Les Livres Bleus, 1937. Pp. 235. 9 fr.

Pastor Farelly, editor of *La Solidarité Social,* and author of various works

of fiction and manuals of devotion, all written to propagate Christian faith and social ideals, turns his attention in this work to the Christian movement from the crucifixion of Jesus to the first ministries of the Apostle Paul. The hero of the story, who relates his own experience in the first person, is the very Roman soldier, Demas by name, a blue-eyed Gallic recruit, who drove the nails into the body of the tragic victim of the crucifixion and to whom there fell by lot the seamless garment of the Crucified. His wearing this seamless robe, which is recognized by the disciples of Jesus, necessarily brings him into increasing contact with them. The death of Stephen proves a turning-point in his career. His adherence to Christianity arrays him against Saul the persecuting Rabbi, brings him under Roman discipline, and makes him at length a fugitive in flight toward Damascus, where he participates in the reception of the converted Rabbi and allies himself with the Apostle to the Gentiles as he sets forth on his errand of world-evangelization. Cleia, daughter of the Roman centurion in charge of the crucifixion, whose father early became a convert, and who manifests her stability of character and heroism as the story progresses, is the heroine of the story. She becomes the wife of Demas, now a legionnaire of the Lord Jesus, who counts Paul the Apostle his centurion. The author makes skilful and effective use of the New Testament materials, without, however, attempting any interpretative reconstruction of the action or significance of the biblical narrative.

H. B. R.

The Nature of Religious Experience. Julius Seelye Bixler, Editor. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937. Pp. xiv+244. $2.50.

This volume is more than the ordinary *Festschrift,* though it is a symposium offered as a token of esteem to Professor Douglas Clyde Macintosh of Yale University, by eleven of his former students, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. It is a series of more or less related papers, representing serious studies of certain aspects of a common theme, a theme of focal interest for many years to Dr. Macintosh, and of very definite concern to every student of the philosophy of religion. The authors of the several papers rightly recognize in the empiricism and realism of Dr. Macintosh "an acute and original contribution to the present philosophical situation," a serious and fruitful application of scientific method to the problem of religion.

The contributors are all teachers in the field of religion or of philosophy. The eleven represent seven different institutions. The list itself stirs one to anticipation: H. G. Bewkes, J. S. Bixler, R. C. Calhound, V. Ferm, H. Hartshorne, C. Kruse, H. R. Niebuhr, R. Niebuhr, F. C. S. Northrop, D. S. Robinson, G. F. Thomas. The papers are, of course, of unequal value; nor are they in full accord. But this is as it should be, in the interest of truth.

Although most of the papers are more or less original explorations of the particular topics with which they deal, and thus not expositions of Professor Macintosh's point of view, the first paper, which places Macintosh against the background of Scottish realism rather than that of Hegelianism and Ritschlianism, as is more usual, is somewhat an exception. The next five papers discuss: the nature and uniqueness of religious experience; religious institutions and their

possible verification; value experience versus the adaptation of scientific empricism as basis for religious construction; the question whether reliance upon value experience does not lead to subjectivity and illusion; the truth to be found in religious myths. Then follow papers on: the place of values in a realistic epistemology; the place of the distinct and separate knower in modern empricism; the problem of the one and the many: psychology's disclosure of our growing awareness of the environing world; and the kind of liberalism which empirical religion of the type illustrated by Professor Macintsoh justifies.

The volume concludes with a complete listing of the books, parts of books, articles and reviews which have issued from the pen of Professor Macintosh, a list covering some eight pages. So worthy a volume deserves an index.

H. B. R.

Thoughts on Life and Death. William Ernest Hocking. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937. Pp. 260. $2.00.

The reader has access in this volume to an expanded form of the Ingersoll Lecture, delivered at Harvard University in 1936, and of the Hiram W. Thomas Lecture, delivered that same year at the University of Chicago. The first lecture was entitled "Meanings of Death," the second, "Meanings of Life." The two constitute a noble attempt to view life and death in adequate perspective.

From the beginning to the appendix on "Biology and the Meaning of Human Life," the discussion is concerned with meannig. Though meaning is built from the part to the whole, it nevertheless descends from the whole to its parts. It is well to be realistic; but the mystic view absorbs the realist view, and brings back the dawn into the sunset, the endless otherness of life into the crux of death.

Meanings are both particular and general: life must have particular meanings and meaning in general; for a meaningless whole implies meaningless parts. Men like Jung and Link point out that most of their clients are suffering ultimately from a single malady—that life has no meaning for them. Professor Dewey reaches the conclusion that stable and unified living depends upon our ability to give ourselves whole-heartedly to the service of the ideal; and this conclusion brings him face to face with the sterilities of a physical naturalism. But we cannot, as Dewey proposes, depend for the meaning of life on the half-world of the imagination. Humanism tries to borrow for its humanitarian zeal an inherent worth in the individual human being which its premises forbid him to have.

Meaning focuses in the self; if the self vanishes, and all like it, meaning vanishes out of the world. Life may be conceived, then, as an apprenticeship in the capacity to create. But if this is to have its fulfilment, if life is to have meaning, it must have a supplement, a perspective of perpetuity. The conclusions are, however, not to natural immortality, but to immortability. Survival of death is viewed as a possibility, not as a necessity of destiny. "For unless there is a way for the continuance of the human self, the world is full of the blunt edges of human meaning, the wreckage of human values, and therefore of the failure of God." Consequently, for religion, Hocking would say that the notion of survival "is the most important of all dogmas."

It need scarcely be added that this work will amply repay careful study. Its approach is characteristically that which marks the main body of Professor

Hocking's published work. It is the deposit of a mature mind and a discerning spirit. H. B. R.

The Recovery of Ideals. Georgia Harkness. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937. Pp. xiii+237. $2.00.

Believing that both religion and morals are primarily rooted in living and only secondarily in thought, Professor Harkness here undertakes an empirical approach to a social philosophy and a philosophy of religion She states her case rather in the terms of a theistic realism than of the metaphysical idealism in which she was trained. The post-War dissolution of ideals sets the problem of the recovery of a creative idealism.

In the exploration of human nature, the author is led to affirm both original sin and original goodness. Only an idealism which goes beyond the mere achievement of social respectability to the level of triumphant religion can contribute to the stability of character which our times so demand. Triumphant religion is normative, demanding as it does both incarnation in life and clarification of ideas.

In the latter realm, practical certainty at least is possible, and the best approach to it will lie in what may be called a "synoptic supernaturalism." Such a view is definitely theistic; for it, God is an organizing mind, the source and goal of ideals, the cosmic companion and the poet of the universe. Thus he is not as some have been saying of late, the whole or a part of nature; he is not a process nor an interaction. Though personal in a real sense, God is limited very definitely.

It is at this point that Professor Harkness makes her most original contribution to philosophy of religion. Her theistic realism is one with Professor Brightman's in affirming a definite limitation in God, beyond that imposed by human freedom and the fact of an orderly universe. But she does not accept Professor Brightman's "given" in the nature of God as the answer. She discovers it rather in what she calls inertia in things and chance in events. For her, creation is an eternal process, in which things have a measure of independence and action; there is in it a certain spontaneity which may issue in purposeful divine activity, in free human activity for good or evil ends, or in a "morally neutral, unwilled juxtaposition of circumstances." It would seem that in this line of thought, Necessity has a definite if not quite Platonic, reinstatement.

Aside from its theoretic interest, the work has many very practical values. As an attempt at a realistic study of existence, it is genuinely worthy, the sort of thing one has learned to expect from Dr. Harkness' pen. Now and again, as it seems to this reviewer, there is a rather too palpable attempt to carry new wine in the old bottles of a trite religious vocabulary. H. B. R.

Legacy of a Christian Mind. Eugene Garrett Bewkes, Ph.D. (Edin.) Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1937. Pp. 305. $2.00.

In this important volume, Dr. Bewkes, who is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the School of Philosophy and Religion in Colgate University, recalls to the mind of the Protestant world, and particularly the Anglo-American religious world, an all-but-forgotten personality whom the late H. R. Mackintosh rated "the greatest of all Scottish theologians"—John M'Leod Campbell.

Campbell's brief career as a minister of the Established Church of Scotland, which culminated in a heresy trial and his unfrocking; his later ministry of an Independent church in Glasgow; and his recognition at the hands of Scotland's leading clerics and thinkers—such men as John and Edward Caird and Norman Macleod—are sympathetically traced.

Cast out because of his break with the doctrine of a limited atonement and his protest of the fear psychology which it had generated, Campbell, who was an indefatigable student and writer, had by 1856, with the publication of his work on *The Nature of the Atonement,* established his eminence as a religious thinker. As Dr. Bewkes sees it, Campbell made a distinct contribution to the handling of three great problems: the problem of religious knowledge, the conflict between naturalism and religion, and the understanding of the atonement. The bulk of this work is given to Campbell's contribution in these three areas.

A good deal of a religious realist, as he would no doubt be termed today, Campbell supplemented the appeal to the rational by the appeal to experience, by which it is enriched and modified. Since the ideational element is inseparably interfused with the element of feeling in religious experience, Campbell would not lay the exclusive emphasis upon feeling which Schleiermacher did. But, stressing the reasonableness of religion, he still wished to view it in direct relations of spiritual apprehension. There is a direct presence of God in religious experience, which outruns both the rational and the moral; a presence of God, so to say, in its own right.

Evolution was just at that time seeming to make God and religion indispensable; so, at any rate, the new naturalism held. But Campbell insisted that you cannot separate the natural order from God: the spiritual is intimately a part of the objective order. Moreover, our relationship to God is not merely a natural one; it is also personal. "In the realm of religion," he argued, "the character of God takes the place of the fixedness of law in the natural order." Prayer, which expresses this personal relationship, involves the supernatural. Our relationship to God is a living one, which calls for its own descriptive nomenclature, a nomenclature not supplied by science as such.

Dr. Bewkes has faithfully followed the various nuances of Campbell's thinking about the atonement, which then, and perhaps now, seemed his greatest contribution. If he was partly misunderstood, it was in some measure his own fault, since he so frequently attempted, with only partial success, to endow old terms with new meanings, meanings not those of the orthodox tradition. The approach of the loving God to man, through Jesus Christ, has no reference to propitiation. God does not have to be made gracious. As we penetrate the communion of Christ with God, we realize that his communion is at the same time an outpouring of suffering love, which has the effect upon us of rendering us worthy to be forgiven, as we penitently regard it. The atonement is complete, for us, when we are lifted up to spiritual sonship. In the end, we are saved "through knowing what God is, and not through a transaction worked for us." The cross is something in which we ourselves have spiritually to participate.

The final chapter offers an evaluation of Campbell which will repay careful study. Here he is compared with Schleiermacher, Ritschl and Bushnell, to the last of whom he seems more akin than to either of the others.

The volume is well documented, and concludes with a brief bibliography of Campbell's writings and an appendix in which the relation of his thought of the atonement to that of Canon Moberly is traced. The work will repay careful study.

H. B. R.

The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia. John Bartlet Brebner. New York: Columbia University Press, 1937. Pp. xv+388. Analysis of Contents. Two Appendices. Bibliography of nine pages including unprinted sources. Comprehensive index. Map of Nova Scotia at the time of the American revolution. $4.00.

In a sequel to his "New England's Outpost," the Associate Professor of History at Columbia University undertakes to explain why Nova Scotia, geographically and economically and racially a part of New England, remained loyal to old England during revolutionary days. The explanation of the paradox is sought in a study of the New England occupation of the lands from which the Acadians were expelled; the accommodation of the Acadian remnant to British rule, the story of Nova Scotia 1760–1782, and the neutralization of the imported New Englanders within a decade and one-half of mass immigration. He finds the majority in Nova Scotia as in the thirteen colonies passive regarding loyalty to the imperial government but conversely in Nova Scotia neither minority could rouse its members to continued joint action pro or con. The factors that especially favored the active loyalist minority were the campaign against Governor Legge, the interests of the official class in Halifax, the general interpretation of Halifax as a British naval and military outpost, its war prosperity, the topographical barriers between the seaport and the outlying population, and the poverty of Nova Scotia. In summary,

> "to use a generalization so broad as to be almost meaningless without corroborative detail, Nova Scotia had insulated and neutralized the New England migrants so thoroughly that as Nova Scotians they had to look eastward to London for direction and help rather than southwestward to Boston as they had done in the past."

C. H. M.

The Meanings of Unity; The Communion of Saints; The Non-Theological Factors in the Making and Unmaking of Church Union; A Decade of Objective Progress in Church Unity, 1927–1936; Next Steps on the Road to a United Church—five reports prepared by the Commission on the Church's Unity in Life and Worship for the World Conference on Faith and Order, Edinburgh, 1937, and all published by Harper & Brothers, New York.

One who masters the contents of these five studies will be introduced to all of the principal problems involved in the attainment of Christian unity in the twentieth century. No longer need it be said that there are no concise dependable discussions available to the Christian laity interested in the trend toward unity. H. Paul Douglass, Gaius Jackson Slosser, Angus Dun, Willard L. Sperry, and William Adams Brown hold themselves rigidly to the subjects assigned and present their case so as to enlist considerable interest and, we hope, stronger support.

C. H. M.